

successive Imperial Conferences from 1887 to 1930. The Imperial Conference held at London in 1926 defined the self-governing communities of the United Kingdom and the Dominions as "autonomous communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations". That Conference also recognized that, as a consequence of this equality of status, the Governor General of a Dominion "is the representative of the Crown, holding in all essential respects the same position in relation to the administration of public affairs in the Dominion as is held by His Majesty the King in Great Britain", and that "it is the right of the Government of each Dominion to advise the Crown in all matters relating to its own affairs". Simultaneously with this change in the constitutional relation between the several parts of the British Commonwealth of Nations, there developed, as a complementary aspect of nationhood, the assumption by the several Dominions of the further responsibilities and rights of sovereign states in their relations with other members of the community of nations. Membership in the League of Nations and, more recently, in the United Nations, the exercise of treaty-making powers and the establishment of separate diplomatic representation in a number of foreign countries have characterized this phase in the growth of Canada. More explicit recognition of the implications of the principles of equality of status was accorded in the Statute of Westminster of 1931, which, with one exception, provided for the removal of the remaining limitations on the legislative autonomy of the Commonwealth nations. (That exception, discussed above, was a clause inserted at the request of Canada in order that the whole B.N.A. Act should not be amendable by an ordinary Act of the Parliament of Canada.)

Thus Canada, under the Crown, has equality of status with Britain and the other Commonwealth nations in both domestic and foreign affairs, and has long taken an independent place in international forums.

II The Government of Canada

1. The Federal Government

In Canada, there is a fusion of the executive and legislative powers as in Britain. Formal executive power in Canada is vested in the Queen, whose authority is delegated to her representative, the Governor General. Legislative power is vested in the Parliament of Canada, which consists of the Queen, an appointed upper house,