

dominion concerned, it would be made readily practicable in case of need for that dominion to mobilize and use them for the defence of the empire as a whole.

The military conference then entrusted to a sub-conference, consisting of military experts at headquarters and from the various dominions, and presided over by Sir W. Nicholson, acting for the first time in the capacity of chief of the imperial general staff, the duty of working out the detailed application of these principles.

I may point out here that the creation early this year of an imperial general staff, thus brought into active working, is a result of the discussions and resolutions of the conference of 1907. Complete agreement was reached by the members of the sub-conference, and their conclusions were finally approved by the main conference and by the committee of imperial defence, which sat for the purpose under the presidency of the Prime Minister. The result is a plan for so organizing the forces of the Crown wherever they are that, while preserving the complete autonomy of each dominion, should the dominions desire to assist in the defence of the empire in a real emergency, their forces could be rapidly combined into one homogenous imperial army.

Naval defence was discussed at the meetings of the conference held at the Foreign Office on the 3rd, 5th and 6th August. The admiralty memorandum, which had been circulated to the Dominion representatives, formed the basis of the preliminary conferences.

The alternative methods which might be adopted by Dominion governments in co-operating in imperial naval defence were discussed. New Zealand preferred to adhere to her present policy of contribution; Canada and Australia preferred to lay the foundation of fleets of their own. It was recognized that in building up a fleet, a number of conditions should be conformed to. The fleet must be of a certain size in order to offer a permanent career to the officers and men engaged in the service; the personnel should be trained and disciplined under regulations similar to those established in the Royal navy, in order to allow of both interchange and union between the British and Dominion services; and with the same object, the standard of vessels and armaments should be uniform.

A remodelling of the squadrons maintained in far eastern waters was considered on the basis of establishing a Pacific fleet, to consist of three units in the East Indies, Australia and China seas, each comprising, with some variations, a large armoured cruiser of the new 'Indomitable' type, three second-class cruisers of the 'Bristol' type, six destroyers of the River class, and three submarine of 'C' class.

Further on:

Separate meetings took place at the admiralty with the representatives of Canada, Australia and New Zealand, and general statements were agreed to in each case for further consideration by their respective governments.

Further on:  
Mr. MONK.

As regards Canada, it was considered that her double sea-board rendered the provision of a fleet unit of the same kind unsuitable for the present. It was proposed, according to the amount of money that might be available, that Canada should make a start with cruisers of the Bristol class, and destroyers of an improved River class—a part to be stationed on the Atlantic sea-board and a part on the Pacific.

In accordance with an arrangement already made, the Canadian government would undertake the maintenance of the dockyards at Halifax and Esquimalt, and it was a part of the arrangement proposed with the Australian representatives that the Commonwealth government should eventually undertake the maintenance of the dockyard at Sydney.

Will my right hon. friend or any of the gentlemen who sit behind him, from the province of Quebec at any rate, state that even this has been laid before the people of our province. They have never heard of it, in that shape or in any shape, and have never had any occasion to pronounce their opinion upon so important a matter.

Let us look a little deeper into this matter and see what was laid down in regard to this policy at this conference. The admiralty memorandum—I am now speaking of naval defence—was fully approved by our delegates. I will quote from it as briefly as possible. But I appeal to the good sense and good faith of the House to say whether any man who takes the trouble to read through this blue-book can arrive at any other conclusion than that which I laid down a few moments ago, that under the terms of this agreement we undertook to accomplish the duty that our delegates subscribed to, either by building a fleet of our own, or by contributions of ships or of money. In either case the principle is the same.

In the admiralty memorandum in respect to naval defence, I find this laid down:

Separate meetings accordingly took place at the admiralty with the representatives of Canada, Australia and New Zealand, when the following general statements were agreed to in each case, it being recognized that in the time available it was impossible that all details should be thoroughly gone into and settled. Several administrative and financial points remained still to be decided.

And in the admiralty memorandum, which has our approval entirely so far, this is said at page 23:

2. If the problem of imperial naval defence were considered merely as a problem of naval strategy, it would be found that the greatest output of strength for a given expenditure is obtained by the maintenance of a single navy with the concomitant unity of training and unity of command. In furtherance, then, of the simple strategical ideal the maximum of power would be gained if all parts of the empire contributed, according to their needs and