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Section X

External Affairs

Section IX

Relations with
United Kingdom

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Sir John Willison, LL.D.

Chapter "RELATIONS WITH THE EMPIRE"

Pp. 44-45

"Warned, perhaps, by the pother over the Lausanne Treaty, the British Government, on July 3, invited Canada to send a representative to an Inter-Allied conference in London to consider the Dawes Report for the solution of post-war problems. The King Government accepted the invitation, and, pending the formal conference, named Hon. P.C. Larkin, High Commissioner for Canada, to participate in the preliminary conversations, and appointed Hon. Senator Belcourt as Canadian representative. Meantime, the Dominions were informed that the British delegation to the Conference would consist of three men, two from the Government of Great Britain and the third from the Overseas Dominions, the latter to be changed from day to day. This plan Canada finally accepted.

"When the Colonial Office estimates came up in the British House of Commons on July 29, Rt. Hon. L.M.S. Amery objected to the panel system of representation at international conferences. 'We ought to make it clear to the rest of the world,' said Mr. Amery, 'that they must take the British Empire as they find it, and we cannot diminish the status of our own Dominions merely in order to meet the conveniences of other Powers.' The Colonial Secretary said that the panel system had not been satisfactory, and that in order to reach a settled policy on Dominion representation the Government had determined to call a Conference, probably in October, at which all the outlying portions of the Empire would be represented.

"On Aug. 7 Premier King announced that Canada would send as delegates to the proposed conference, Hon. Senator Dandurand and Hon. E.M. MacDonald, with Dr. O.D. Skelton, counsellor to the Department of External Affairs, as adviser. Meanwhile, New Zealand and Australia heard of the proposed Conference with only languid interest; with the consequence that, on Sept. 30, announcement was made at the Colonial Office that no Conference would be held. Thus the Ramsay MacDonald Ministry, on the eve of its condemnation by the electors, found itself naked of a satisfactory inter-Imperial policy. Even the Arbitration and Disarmament Protocol, approved by the Assembly of the League of Nations, did not stand well in Dominion eyes.

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