

tions which seem to me to be eminently in the domain of the United Kingdom. We may give advice if our advice is sought; but if your advice is sought, or if you tender it, I do not think the United Kingdom can undertake to carry out this advice unless you are prepared to back that advice with all your strength, and take part in the war and insist upon having the rules carried out according to the manner in which you think the war should be carried out. We have taken the position in Canada that we do not think we are bound to take part in every war, and that our fleet may not be called upon in all cases, and, therefore, for my part, I think it is better under such circumstances to leave the negotiations of these regulations as to the way in which the war is to be carried on to the chief partner of the family, the one who has to bear the burden in part on some occasions, and the whole burden on perhaps other occasions.

Such was the attitude taken by Canada's representative, and this attitude prevailed. And Sir Edward Grey, representing the Foreign Office, conceded in definite terms that, whenever possible, he in future would consult all the dominions in respect to matters of foreign policy and in respect to treaties before they were actually signed.

I pass on to another phase of the question. I need not read what was said; it is all in the report. As I said, nothing was more emphasized at the conference of 1911 than our absolute right of self-government. No one had the right to interfere with us. Our rights were clear, distinct and well understood. No further conference was held until the year 1917. A conference should have been held in 1915 but it was omitted owing to the outbreak of war. In 1917, however, there was held in London a conference known as a war conference, at which action was taken in a formal way on motion of Sir Robert Borden who represented Canada. This was the first suggestion of a constitutional conference, and I want to place it before the House. The motion moved by Sir Robert Borden before the conference of 1917 was in these words:

The Imperial War Conference are of opinion that the readjustment of the constitutional relations of the component parts of the empire is too important and intricate a subject to be dealt with during the war, and that it should form the subject of a special imperial conference to be summoned as soon as possible after the cessation of hostilities.

They deem it their duty, however, to place on record their view that any such readjustment, while thoroughly preserving all existing powers of self-government and complete control of domestic affairs, should be based upon a full recognition of the dominions as autonomous nations of an imperial commonwealth and of India as an important portion of the same, should recognize the right of the dominions and India to an adequate voice in foreign policy and in foreign relations, and should provide effective arrangements for continuous consultation in all important matters of common imperial concern.

And Sir Robert Borden, in discussing his motion, said that such a conference should be held only after consultation with the people and when representatives of all political parties were present. This resolution referred to a constitutional conference to be held in the future. In 1918 another war conference was held which resulted in the treaty of Peace. Our representatives attended at Paris; they became actual signatories to the treaty of Peace and also to the covenant of the League of Nations. They signed for the Dominion of Canada. Every other overseas dominion had its representatives there and those representatives signed on behalf of their own overseas dominion.

The next conference was that of 1921. There had been a good deal of change in the position of the overseas dominions since the 1917 conference; not only had we been recognized as free and equal nations, but we had actually signed the treaty of Peace, I suppose the most memorable treaty of modern or of ancient times. There we stood in Paris shoulder to shoulder with the other nations of the world and recognized as being on an equality with Great Britain and the other nations. Therefore when the conference met in London in 1921 a question immediately arose as to whether it was now necessary to call a constitutional conference pursuant to the resolution of 1917. The constitutional situation had greatly changed; our position had become definite and accepted. What was the need of a conference? In the report of the 1921 conference the following resolution appears at page 9:

Continuous consultation, to which the Prime Ministers attach no less importance than the Imperial War Conference of 1917, can only be secured by a substantial improvement in the communications between the component parts of the empire. Having regard to the constitutional developments since 1917, no advantage is to be gained by holding a constitutional conference.

Such was the definite opinion of those who attended the conference of 1921. The position of each of the overseas dominions at that time was definite and ascertained. What more could be done by a constitutional conference? Let me read just one or two short extracts on the speech of Mr. Lloyd George, who was Prime Minister of Great Britain at the time. Mr. Lloyd George as reported on page 14 said:

In recognition of their services and achievements in the war the British dominions have now been accepted fully into the comity of nations by the whole world. They are signatories to the treaty of Versailles and of all the other treaties of peace; they are members of