

body as the Fourth Congress of the Chambers of Commerce of the Empire, by refusing to appoint the Royal Commission. At the time the request was made, the members of the Government were very much engaged in an important session of the Imperial Parliament; also with affairs connected with the South African campaign, as well as the Chinese difficulties which had only recently reached a climax. It will be easily seen that the time was not opportune for the consideration of the question, having in view also the fact of the approaching British elections.

The question of politics enters so thoroughly into the discussion of this question in Great Britain, that while you find many men who are absolutely convinced that a change in their fiscal policy must come about, they scarcely feel like giving public expression to their views, thinking that the electorate might miscontrue their real meaning. Therefore it would seem the more reasonable that the first step to be taken would be the appointment of such a Commission as has been suggested.

It would seem that the necessities of the Empire in the future, in respect to commerce and defence, would demand a more definite understanding than has existed in the past, by the introduction of a Commercial Bond at the outstart, on moderate lines, the link which binds the Mother Country to her dependencies would be greatly strengthened, and the sentimental bond which now exists would be perpetuated.

Evidence is not wanting to show that from various quarters in Great Britain, complaint is being made at the tardy action of the Imperial Government in not showing a greater desire to grapple with this question, and whilst in this and other Congresses, there have been differences of opinion on the subject, the ground may well be taken, that having unanimously decided upon a compromise Resolution, it is only British fair play for everyone to join in seeing the Government take some action in carrying out the wishes of representative bodies all over the Empire.

A resolution was passed by the Congress, dealing with the question of the Defence of the Empire. This resolution recognized that the Colonies should contribute towards the cost of the naval and military defence of the Empire.