

In July 1896, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Mr. Chamberlain, transmitted to the governors and commanding officers in all the overseas dominions—Crown or self-governing colonies—a memorandum, marked "confidential", but not "secret," dated May 19th 1896, and also prepared under the authority of the Colonial Defence Committee. That paper was but the enunciation, under a more developed form, of the principles of military defence which had been accepted by the Australian colonies, after repeated efforts on the part of British authorities, and which it was now sought to extend to the other portions of the Empire. While requesting the Colonial authorities not to make the paper public, the Colonial Secretary recommended that it should be communicated freely to civil officials and military officers responsible for the defence of each colony.

One year later, in August 1897, the memorandum just brought down was sent by Mr. Chamberlain to the same Colonial authorities. Dated December 31st 1896, and therefore already seven months old when sent, this second report is the exact reproduction of the paper dated May 19th of the same year, with the exception of some details on points of strategy, which ought not, as was properly thought, to be known to foreigners. Two interesting paragraphs, one of general interest and the other referring especially to Canada, were also left out without any apparent motive of national safety. To these I will refer presently.

Apart from those excisions, the second document, I repeat, was absolutely identical with the first—except that it was marked neither "secret" nor "confidential", and for an excellent reason: the suppressions made in the first text were made precisely in order that the second edition might be published.

The explanation is simple. The object of the first memorandum was to impress upon the minds of colonial authorities the principles of Imperial defence; and in order to better reach its purpose by being more conclusive, it contained certain strategical informations tending to facilitate the application of the general principles. In making the second report, the Committee meant to popularise, to vulgarise, so to speak, those same principles, with a view to inducing the people of the colonies to accept