

II

Real partnership : one army, one navy, one budget

Short of absolute independence, there is, there can be, for the Dominions, but one solution: Imperial partnership. To be real and complete, while remaining in accord with the fundamental principles of the Commonwealth, Imperial partnership can be accomplished only by the creation of an Imperial parliament, elected by the people of all self-governing countries in the Empire, coupled with an Imperial cabinet responsible to that parliament and to no others. The jurisdiction of those new legislative and executive bodies must be confined to the general interests of the Commonwealth. The internal affairs of the United Kingdom would remain under the exclusive control of the present government and parliament in London, just as the affairs of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa are now — or rather *were*, before the war — under the exclusive control of the governments and parliaments sitting respectively at Ottawa, Melbourne, Wellington and Pretoria.

"Drastic as the change seems it is not so drastic a change as the disruption of the Commonwealth, and when it is realised that *those are the real alternatives*, some leaders, not in one party only, but perhaps in all, would be found to support it" (pp. 153-4).

To understand the working of the proposed system, one must first realise "the inter-relation of foreign affairs, defence, and finance" (chap. xvi).

"The cost of naval defence and the responsibility for the conduct of foreign affairs hang together," once said SIR HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN.¹ Of course, by "naval defence", he meant the general defence of the Empire, of which the navy is the principal weapon.

"We are absolutely safe", says MR. CURTIS, "in assuming that no cabinet will ever be formed for the conduct of Imperial affairs which does not include the First Lord of the Admiralty, the Secretary of State for War and an Imperial Minister of Finance,

¹ Opening speech of the Colonial Conference, 1907 — [Cd. 3523].