

and usage. These Dominions may be designated "almost" sovereign although their Legislatures are non-sovereign law-making bodies and almost independent although they are theoretically amenable to the legislation of the Imperial Parliament and absolutely bound by the foreign policy of the Imperial Cabinet. Their position of independence and sovereignty for all practical purposes is due to the policy of the Imperial Government not to interfere with the action of the Dominions in their own affairs and to the complete sympathy between the Imperial Government and the Dominions in foreign affairs—a fact which has been demonstrated by the present war. "The tendency," wrote Professor Dicey so far back as 1885, "of the Imperial Government is as a matter of policy to interfere less and less with the action of the colonies whether in the way of law-making or otherwise. Colonial Acts, moreover, even when finally assented to by the Crown, are invalid if repugnant to an Act of Parliament applying to the colony. The Imperial policy, therefore, of non-intervention in the local affairs of British dependencies combines with the supreme legislative authority of the British Parliament to render encroachments by the British Parliament on the sphere of colonial legislation and by colonial Parliaments in the domain of Imperial legislation of rare occurrence."

In welcoming the system of Imperial Conferences to discuss matters concerning all parts of our Empire for the purpose of determining the true orientation of our common Imperial policy, General Smuts laid stress on the effect of such a system in securing the knowledge and control of foreign policy by the people not only of these countries, from whom such knowledge and control have hitherto been withheld, but by the peoples of the British Empire. He thus enunciated a doctrine frequently expanded in these columns. "In the overseas Dominions," he said, "they did not understand diplomatic finesse, and if our foreign policy was going to rest not only on our Cabinet here, but finally on the whole British Empire, that policy would have to be a simpler policy, a more intelligible policy, a policy which in the end would lead to less friction and to greater safety. At the same time nobody would dispute the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament. They