

tion should be selected entirely from the British Isles. That delegation had authority to represent not only the British Isles, but the whole Empire. He, therefore, strongly urged that the delegation representing the British Empire should be in part selected from a panel, upon which each Prime Minister from the Dominions should have a place, and that one or more of those Prime Ministers should be called from time to time, as occasion might require, to sit in the delegation representing the whole Empire at the Conference.

Lord Robert Cecil agreed with Sir Robert Borden as to the wisdom of creating such a panel, and suggested that its members might serve on a kind of rota.

The Prime Minister, who also approved of the idea of the panel, said that the real business of the Peace Conference would be transacted not at the formal conferences, but at the small informal conversations. The Dominions and India would have the same representation as Serbia, Belgium, and Roumania. He considered, however, that it would be unwise to press for such a full representation of the British Empire, at the first big conference and its final meeting, as five delegates from Great Britain and three each from the Dominions and India, because in that event there would be no fewer than twenty-three representatives of the British Empire at such meetings: and in attempting to get so full a representation we might run the risk of losing more than we gained.

The Imperial War Cabinet decided that—

(a) Representatives of the British Dominions and India ought to be present at the opening session and at any other session of the Peace Conference or the Allied Preliminary Conference (should it be held) at which Belgium and other smaller Allied States were represented.

(b) The British Dominions and India should in all respects have the same powers as, and be on an equal footing at the Conference with, Belgium and other smaller Allied States.

(c) Lord Robert Cecil should re-cast the telegram to Paris on these principles.

(d) The Prime Ministers of the Dominions and the representatives of India should be placed on a panel from which part of the personnel of the British delegation could be filled, according to the subject for discussion.

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## 21. *Prime Minister to Prime Minister of United Kingdom*

SECRET

Dear Mr. Lloyd George,

London, December 31, 1918

I was impressed with a suggestion made to me by Lord Curzon after today's Cabinet. He considers it desirable that the representation of the British Empire should consist of three named delegates and of two others to