

One reason why so many groups have been established is the necessity for proper preparation for the 1933 Conferences, for the groups not only prepare their own members for the discussions at these Conferences, but also do essential work in helping to prepare the Canadian data papers. Another reason for the establishment of these groups is the increased interest of the members of the Institute in international affairs. The existence of these groups is to be welcomed not only because of these reasons, but also because it provides one solution to the problem of how best to meet the pressure to increase the membership of the branches. The Ottawa Branch, for example, is faced with this pressure, and in commenting on it, the Honorary Secretary, Mr. J.A. Wilson, has written:

"This, of course, is a splendid thing and shows the interest the Institute is creating. Too big a membership, however, tends to spoil the intimate nature of the discussions. Probably the solution is more study groups, and fewer general meetings."

This rapid expansion of study group activities has its dangers. A study group to do effective work must contain first-rate men who are authorities on the matter under discussion. Such men will only take part in the work of a study group if they are certain their time is being well spent. It is, therefore, essential that those in charge of a study group should make careful preparations for its work well in advance of its first meeting. Such preparation was not always possible last year and there is consequently danger that some of the best members of the Institute may have become discouraged and it may consequently prove difficult to persuade them to join a group in the future.

To prevent this danger from recurring it would be advisable to lay the plans for future study group activities some four months in advance of the first meeting of the group. After the subjects of the study groups had been decided on in the spring by the branch executive a small Inner Group might be appointed for each study group, whose business it would be to lay down the terms of reference of the enquiry, to plan the meetings of the group, to assign the papers to be presented, and to prepare the purely factual material necessary as a background for the discussion. This factual material could be circulated to the members during the summer. It is, of course, impossible at the present time for this preliminary work to be done in Canada as efficiently as in the Royal Institute where each study group has the services of a full-time secretary. However, the Inner Group could receive very valuable advice and information from Chatham House similar to the advice which their Study Groups Department gives to private groups of the Royal Institute and it would also, in many cases, be able to obtain from the Information Department of Chatham House much of the factual material which it required. The Secretariat of the Canadian Institute would also be very glad to offer its services. Moreover it might be possible if a study group of the Canadian Institute were pursuing the same investigation as one in London for it to have the benefit of the material prepared by Chatham House for their study group, and perhaps to have also the use of material prepared by the Council on Foreign Relations for one of their study groups. The work of the Inner Group would not be completed when the meetings of the full group commenced because the Inner Group would be charged with drawing up the draft report of the group. This draft report would then be submitted to the Outer Group.