

His Majesty should be advised to appoint a commission of a more permanent kind to discharge the same functions in regard to questions of joint concern. . . . Its functions would be of a purely consultative and advisory character, and would not supersede but supplement those of the Colonial Office. . . . It would probably be convenient that the Secretary of the Commission should also act as Secretary of the Imperial Council when it met."

This proposal for conferring increased status in and giving greater continuity to the Colonial Conference, as originally constituted, was approved by Cape Colony, Natal, and Australia. With reference to the joint permanent commission, the government of Cape Colony considered that "such an intelligence department, well-equipped as it would no doubt be, with information and facts requiring examination with a view to harmonizing the legislation of the United Kingdom and the colonies, is an essential adjunct, and will very materially facilitate and expedite the work of the present body." Australia puts forward the question of preferential trade, endorses the substitution of "Imperial Council" for "Colonial Conference", agrees in the view "that the proposed council should be left to develop by adaptation as circumstances may require, and shares the confidence that its establishment will promote that unity both of sentiment and action within the Empire on which the peace and welfare of a large part of the world depends." Newfoundland expresses its opinion, through Sir Robert Bond, with "very great diffidence",—reading into the proposal more than would appear from the papers as published, in the way of curtailment of colonial rights and contributions to Imperial Defence. New Zealand was dilatory in its reply to Mr. Lyttelton's despatch, owing to elections and the difficulty of getting a full meeting of the Cabinet. But it undertook to send a representative to the Conference.

The Canadian Government lagged behind all the others in sending its reply, and the attitude then disclosed deserves a careful statement. The Dominion Ministers begin by