

Commonwealth in its relations with foreign states, but should also be based upon a full recognition of the status of the Dominions 'as autonomous nations of an Imperial Commonwealth' entitled to 'an adequate voice in foreign policy and foreign relations', in accordance with Resolution IX of the Imperial War Conference, 1917. To this end they submit the following proposals.

"3. At any foreign capital where a Dominion wishes to send a diplomatic envoy, the envoy of the British Commonwealth shall be given the permanent rank and status of His Britannic Majesty's High Commissioner and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary.

"4. The envoy sent by any Dominion to such capital shall be given the rank and status of His Britannic Majesty's Joint High Commissioner and Minister Plenipotentiary.

"5. A Dominion envoy shall be responsible to, and shall communicate directly with, the Dominion Government by which he is appointed.

"6. The envoy for the British Commonwealth and Dominion envoys shall work in the closest conjunction with each other, and shall keep each other informed of the main lines of their action."

The authority of the document is not clear. Loring C. Christie's letter of February 18, 1919, suggests that he wrote it. On the other hand, the first paragraph of the draft seems to indicate that it was the work of all the Dominion prime ministers. What is clear is that Sir Robert Borden and the other Dominion prime ministers discussed the question of representation while at the conference. (2) It is probable that they were all familiar with the text of the memorandum.

Although this document was not formally presented by the Dominions to the British Empire delegation, it did receive some informal attention by various people. One instance of this is documented in a series of three private letters exchanged between Loring C. Christie, Legal Adviser to the Department of External Affairs and one of Borden's closest advisers on external policy, and Lord Eustace Percy, a former official of the Foreign Office, who attended the Peace Conference as Private Secretary to Balfour.

First Percy Letter

A copy of the first draft was given to Percy to read and, on February 14, he returned it to Christie with the following letter:

"My dear Loring,

Many thanks for letting me see the enclosed. I fully agree with it with one exception.

"It is proposed in Paragraph 4 that the envoy of a Dominion should be given the rank and status of H.B.M. *Joint* High Commissioner and Minister Plenipotentiary. I am unalterably opposed to the word *joint*. It is mere

(2) On October 3, 1919, Borden sent a telegram to Hughes of Australia informing him of Canadian plans for representation at Washington. In the last paragraph of this document he refers to "our conversation at Paris".