

(2) He believed that the establishment of regional bodies with practical objectives in view would be an effective answer to the desire expressed in some quarters for the establishment of some form of international control of Colonial territories. So far as the British Empire was concerned, we had nothing to fear from criticism, and it was the intention to revert as soon as possible to the publication of full annual reports of our administration. But, while we welcomed constructive criticism, we were anxious to avoid ill-informed and academic interference.

He did not regard the mandate system as wholly satisfactory. It was out of date in the present day world, being largely negative in character, in that its aim was to lay down negative principles, e.g. the prevention of the use of forced labour. The system had served its purpose, but it had become more of a hindrance than an assistance. Large scale development was generally beyond the local resources of a colonial territory, and without any guarantee of permanency of sovereignty, the parent power was naturally reluctant to provide for large scale expenditure from its own funds. This had been brought home to him in a recent visit to West Africa where he had found that the Cameroons and Togoland were, for this reason, the most backward areas in the territories with which they were amalgamated. He therefore hoped that the mandate system would be abolished.

COLONEL STANLEY also pointed out the disadvantages he saw in the subordination of the proposed regional bodies to any central international organisation. Such a central organisation would contain representatives of powers who had no colonial experience and whose views on the subject could only be academic. In any case, control of colonial territories throughout the world would be a gigantic task and any supervision which was attempted by the central organisation could only be theoretical and superficial.

In his opinion, provision for third party opinion could best be made by the association with the regional commissioners of Powers which, although they had no direct interest by virtue of possession of territory in the area, were concerned because of strategic, economic or other interests. Such Powers would, he hoped, be prepared to assume a certain amount of responsibility in regard to the area.

(3) A third point was that any functional bodies established in connection with a central world organisation, such as the International Labour Office, should be encouraged to set up branches in the areas of the regional commissions to work in close co-operation with the commissions.

These were the main considerations we had in mind. Before action was taken to implement the proposals, they would require to be worked out in detail. Certain problems arose, for example:-

- (a) Which areas were suitable for the establishment of regional commissions? In the Caribbean there was already an embryo organisation. In the South Pacific the Australian and New Zealand Governments had suggested another natural division. There was ample scope in South East Asia for the establishment of a commission. Africa presented more difficulties. He felt that the territories south of the Sahara presented too great and varied problems to be handled by one commission and that the solution might be the establishment of two or three bodies.