

10. As an illustration of this, mention might be made of the arrangements made between the United Kingdom and Canadian Governments concerning the chemical warfare station at Suffield. Early in 1940 it became evident that the facilities of ranges, etc. available in the United Kingdom were inadequate to enable a proper assessment to be made of the value of chemical agents as a war weapon. The situation of the United Kingdom ranges in relation to centres of population did not permit of trials on a sufficiently large scale. The Canadian Government was approached and, after consultation, a large tract of land, providing gun ranges of the order of 40/50 miles, was made available at Suffield in Alberta for conversion into a trial and experimental ground for chemical warfare agents and screening smokes. Certain work on flame throwers and on mortar and gunnery trials and proving has also been carried out there. The cost was initially shared equally between the Canadian and British Governments.

11. As a further illustration, when operations in the Far East were developing in 1944, it became evident that, in case the Japanese should resort to chemical warfare, intensification of effort was needed to obtain more information on the effects of chemical agents in tropical climates. At the request of the Chiefs of Staff, steps were taken, in consultation and agreement with the Australian and Indian Governments, to strengthen and extend the facilities already existing in those countries for research and development in chemical warfare. New chemical warfare research stations were set up at Proserpine in North Queensland and at Cannanore in South India and staff and equipment were sent out from the United Kingdom to assist in getting the new stations into operation as speedily as possible.

12. Ad hoc arrangements of the types outlined above could continue to be made in peace-time but there are obvious disadvantages, and, with the better opportunities for prior consultation now presented, it does not seem desirable to the United Kingdom delegation to perpetuate such bilateral action, essential though it may have been under the stress of war.

Method 2 - Present arrangements but with fuller exchange of information

13. Under peace-time conditions some of the drawbacks of the existing method of collaboration as outlined in Method 1 could be removed by widening the scope of the present arrangements to provide for a general interchange of information on future proposals between members of the Commonwealth. All concerned would then not only receive technical reports and information but would be kept informed of proposed future work.

14. An example of such prior collaboration seems likely to arise in the case of testing facilities for guided missiles for which a range is now being sought in Australia. A special Mission is visiting Australia and it is hoped that it will report in time to enable the United Kingdom delegation to present their views on the general proposal to the Informal Commonwealth Conference on Defence Science. In this case, therefore, all members of the Commonwealth will be made aware of the proposed arrangements before they are implemented.

Method 3 - The setting-up of a Co-ordinating Committee.

15. The means of collaboration suggested in Methods 1 and 2 may not be regarded as providing sufficiently close co-operation and interchange on the vital tasks which have to be undertaken. Nor can it be said that either method will ensure that the best possible use is made of available and potential facilities