

After making the suggestion, without pressing it, that the title of "Colonial Conference" might now be discarded in favour of "Imperial Council", the despatch goes on to say: "His Majesty's government doubt whether it would be wise or necessary to give by any instrument to this council a more formal character, to define more closely its constitution, or to attempt to delimit its functions. The history of Anglo-Saxon institutions, such as parliament or the cabinet system, seems to show that an institution may often be wisely left to develop in accordance with circumstances and, as it were, of its own accord, and that it is well not to sacrifice elasticity of power of adaptation to premature definiteness of form." Then Mr. Lyttelton proceeds to make a suggestion to which he states that His Majesty's Government attaches considerable importance. In view of the necessarily brief session of the Conference, it is desirable, he says, "that subjects which the Prime Ministers agree to discuss should be as much as possible prepared beforehand by a body on which they would be represented, and should be presented to them in as concise and clear a form and with as much material for forming a judgment as possible. In questions of defence, this work is already done by the Imperial Defence Committee, on which also His Majesty's Government desire to obtain from time to time the presence of colonial representatives." The opinion is further expressed, in reference to past experience, that "it would have greatly conduced to acceleration of business and to the utility of the work done by the Conference if there had been in existence a permanent Commission, representing all the states concerned, to which in each case the Conference could have directly referred the task of examining facts and reporting as to the best way of carrying out the principles laid down." After citing the practice of appointing Royal Commissions or departmental committees to inquire into matters referred to them and to suggest solutions, Mr. Lyttelton concludes with the statement that "His Majesty's Government desire to submit for consideration the proposal that