

in London and Paris declined to assent to this proposal, and insisted upon representation in the Peace Conference and in the League of Nations in their own right. The British Government, after some debate, acceded, and, with more difficulty, the consent of the leading Allies was won. The representatives of the Dominions signed the treaty with Germany on behalf of their respective countries, and each Dominion, with India, was made a member of the League. At the same time only the British Empire, and not any of the Dominions, was given a place in the real organ of power, the Executive Council of the League, and in many respects the exact relationship between the United Kingdom and the other parts of the Empire in international affairs was left ambiguous, for later events and counsel to determine. Many French and American observers who had not kept in close touch with the growth of national consciousness within the British Empire were apprehensive lest this plan should prove a deep-laid scheme for multiplying British influence in the Conference and the League. Some misunderstanding was natural in view not only of the unprecedented character of the Empire's development and polity, but of the incomplete and ambiguous nature of