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11—Nov. 26

Foreign Policy and Defence Outlined in Conference Summary

MANY RESOLUTIONS DEALING
WITH EMPIRE AFFAIRS PASSED
AT SESSION OF IMPERIAL AND
ECONOMIC MEETINGS IN LON-
DON—OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS
PUBLISHED.

The summary indicates no new de-
parture in the machinery for con-
sultation with the Dominion on for-
eign policy between Conferences. It
says, however, that the Conference
did not terminate its sittings until
each subject of foreign relations had
been carefully explored and "a com-
mon understanding reached upon the
main heads of foreign policy."

It tells of the negotiations in con-
nection with the proposed inter-Al-
lied conference on reparations and states
that it was held that the European
situation could be lifted to a plane
of possible settlement only by the co-
operation of the United States. The
Conference felt that if the scheme of a
common enquiry to be followed by
common action were to break down it
would be desirable for the British
Government to carefully consider the
alternative of summoning a Confer-
ence itself in order to examine the
financial and economic problem in its
widest aspect.

The Conference further regarded
any policy which would result in
breaking up the unity of the German
state as inconsistent with the treaty
obligations and incompatible with the
future discharge of Germany of her
necessary obligations. The strongest
representations on this subject, occur-
ring, were made to the Allied Gov-
ernments.

Cardinal Feature

On the subject of the three-mile
limit the Conference arrived at the
conclusion that while affirming and
safeguarding as a cardinal feature of
British policy the principle of the
three-mile limit it was yet both de-
sirable and practicable to meet the
American request for the extension of
the right to search beyond this limit
for the regulation of the liquor traffic,
and negotiations at once were opened
with the United States Government
for the conclusion of an experimental
agreement.

The Conference recorded its satis-
faction at the conclusion of peace be-
tween the Allies and Turkey and re-
cognised the great advance made
within the last two years towards the
Pacific settlement of the Egyptian
problem.

It noted with satisfaction the pro-
gressive fulfilment of the obligations
under the Washington treaty, then,
after expressing the opinion that un-
abated support should be given the
League of Nations by the British
members, it makes this qualifying de-
claration:

"The Conference is a conference of
representatives of the several Gov-
ernments of the Empire; its views and
conclusions on foreign policy, as re-
corded above, are necessarily subject
to the action of the Governments, and
Parliaments, of the various portions
of the Empire. It trusts that the re-
sults of its deliberations will meet
with their approval."

The summary speaks of "special
consideration" having been given to
the matter of defence and the manner
"in which co-operation and mutual as-
sistance could best be effected after
taking into account the political and
geographical conditions of the various
parts of the Empire."

There was a full and frank inter-
change of views and the Conference
then passed the following resolutions:

Adequate Defence

"1. The Conference affirms that it
is necessary to provide for the ade-
quate defence of the territories of
trade in the several countries of
trade in the several countries com-
prising the British Empire.

"2. In this connection the Confer-
ence expressly recognizes that it is
for the Parliaments of the several
parts of the Empire upon the recom-
mendations of their respective Gov-
ernments to decide the nature and

extent of any action which should be
taken by them.

"3. Subject to this provision the
Conference suggests the following as
guiding principles:

"(a) Primary responsibility of each
portion of the Empire represented at
the Conference for its own local de-
fence.

"(b) Adequate provision for safe-
guarding the maritime communica-
tions of the several parts of the Em-
pire, the routes and waterways along
and through which their armed forces
and trade pass.

"(c) Provision of naval bases and
facilities for repair and fuel so as to
ensure the mobility of the fleets.

"(d) Desirability of the mainte-
nance of a minimum standard of naval
strength, namely equality with the
naval strength of any foreign power
in accordance with the provisions of
the Washington treaty on the limita-
tion of armament as approved by
Great Britain and all the self-gov-
erning Dominions and India.

"(e) Desirability of the develop-
ment of the air forces in the several
countries of the Empire upon such
lines as will make it possible by means
of adoption, as far as practicable,
of a common system of organization
and training and use of uniform ma-
nuals and patterns of army equip-
ment stores with the exception of the type
of air craft for each part of the Em-
pire as it may determine to co-oper-
ate with other parts with the least
possible delay and the greatest effi-
ciency.

Deep Interest

"4. In the application of these
principles to the several parts of the
Empire concerned the Conference
take note of:

"(a) The deep interest of the Com-
monwealth of Australia, the Dominion
of New Zealand and India in the pro-
vision of a naval base at Singapore
as essential for ensuring the mobility
necessary to provide for the security
of the trade of the Empire in eastern
waters.

"(b) Necessity for the maintenance
of safe passage along the great route
to the east through the Mediterranean
and Red Seas.

"(c) Necessity for the maintenance
by Great Britain of home defence by
an air force of sufficient strength to
give adequate protection against air
attack by the strongest air force
within striking distance of her shores.

"5. The Conference while deeply
concerned for the paramount im-
portance of providing for the safety
and integrity of all parts of the Em-
pire earnestly desires, so far as
is consistent with this consideration,
the further limitation of armaments,
and trusts that no opportunity may
be lost to promote this object."

The treaty making powers of the
Dominions are handled in detail. A
resolution deals first with the pro-
cedure in negotiating a treaty. It pro-
vides that:

"1. It is desirable that no treaty
should be negotiated by any of the
Governments of the Empire without
due consideration of its possible effect
on other parts of the Empire, or if
circumstances so demand on the Em-
pire as a whole.

"2. Before negotiations are opened
with the intention of concluding a
treaty, steps should be taken to en-
sure that any of the other Govern-
ments of the Empire likely to be in-
terested are informed so that if any
such Government considers that its

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interests are informed so that if any
such Government considers that its
interests would be affected it may
have the opportunity of expressing
its views, or when its interests are
intimately involved of participating
in the negotiations.

Full Exchange

"3. In all cases where more than
one of the Governments of the Em-
pire participates in negotiations there
should be the fullest possible ex-
change of views between the Govern-
ments. In case of treaties negotiated
at an International Conference where
there is a British Empire delegation,
on which, in accordance with the new-
ly established practice of the Domi-
nions, India is separately represent-
ed, such representation should also be
utilized to attain this object.

"4. Steps should be taken to ensure
that those Governments of the Em-
pire whose representatives are not par-
ticipating in the negotiations should
during their progress be kept informed
in regard to any points arising in
which they may be interested."

As to the signatures to a treaty,
the question most prominent in con-
nection with the recent halibut treaty
between Canada and the United
States, the resolution reads:

"1. Bilateral treaties imposing ob-
ligations on one part of the Empire
only should be signed by a represen-
tative of the Government of that part.
The full power issued to such repre-
sentative should indicate the part of
the Empire in respect of which the
obligations are to be undertaken and
the preamble and text of the treaty
should be so worded as to make its
scope clear.

"2. Where a bilateral treaty im-
poses obligations on more than one
part of the Empire it should be signed
by one or more plenipotentiaries
on behalf of all the Governments con-
cerned.

"3. As regards treaties negotiated
at international conferences the exist-
ing practice of signature by plenipoten-
tiaries on behalf of all the Govern-
ments of the Empire represented
at the conference should be continued
and full powers should be in the form
employed at Paris and Washington.

"4. The existing practice in con-
nection with the ratification of treat-
ies should be maintained."

Continue Practice

Regarding the negotiation and sig-
nature of agreements of a technical or
administrative character between
Governments the Conference holds
that the existing practice should be
continued, but before entering on
negotiations, the Governments of the
Empire should consider whether the
interests of any other part of the Em-
pire would be affected. If so, steps
should be taken to see that the Gov-
ernment affected has an opportunity
to express its views. An explanatory
statement follows giving the existing
procedure in connection with the
ratification of treaties.

The summary tells further of the
debate on British Indians, of early
discussions on publicity and of de-
partures made in this regard from es-
tablished precedents, and of a further
discussion, initiated by the Canadian
Premier, as to the desirability of the
various Parliaments of the Empire to be
afforded the fullest information possi-
ble on all matters concerning which
negotiations or discussions are in pro-
gress between the various Govern-
ments.

"It was felt," the summary adds,
"that as many as possible of the com-
munications passing ought to be made
available for the use of Parliament
and a general understanding was
reached as to the principles which
should govern the publication of cor-
respondence between the Govern-
ments."

As to High Commissioners' pre-
cedence, their exemption from taxa-
tion, custom duties and so forth, the
British Government undertook to ex-
amine the points raised, explaining
that any alteration in the existing
rules regarding precedence require the
approval of his Majesty the King.

Little Attention

LONDON, Nov. 13.—(Canadian
Press).—With the British Parliament
opening to-day, Imperial Conference
proceedings received little editorial
attention yesterday from the news-

papers. Of the large papers The Times
alone discusses the summary.

The Times says that the Dominion
Prime Ministers to an unprecedented
degree participated in the actual work
of framing the British foreign policy.
"The complete unanimity of the Con-
ference in its deliberations on for-
eign affairs," The Times adds, "is a
most impressive reminder to the rest
of the world that Great Britain's
policy is not the policy of one man or
one Government, but the policy of a
united Commonwealth of Nations."

The most important decision with
regard to the British Commonwealth,
The Times continues, is probably to be
found in the admission of the right of
any single Government of the Empire
to negotiate and sign separate treat-
ies "a recognition of the attitude
adopted by Premier Mackenzie King
and his colleagues in the controversy
which followed the signing of the
halibut fisheries treaty with the
United States."

Further, The Times says, "from the
constitutional point of view, however,
there is nothing to show that there
was any departure from the principle
generally-accepted in the case of the
fisheries treaty, namely, that the
Dominion Government directly ad-
vised the King to issue full powers to
its representative, and that those
powers were granted with the con-
sent of the King on the advice of the
British Government."

The Times thinks that on "the very
important question of defence," the
results of the Conference are the "least
conclusive and the least satisfactory."

The resolution, The Times says, sets
out the obvious fact that it is neces-
sary to provide for adequate defence,
but "there is no constructive sugges-
tion embodied in the report as to how
the burden of adequate defence should
be shared. The only concrete recom-
mendation to the individual nation is
found in the recognition of the need
for the maintenance by the British
Government of an adequate air force."

"Both Australia, in its valiant at-
tempt to maintain the burden of a
Dominion navy, and New Zealand, in
its promise of an increased subsidy,
have given practical proof of their
willingness to accept the responsibility
laid upon them, but the long lines of
British warships at Portsmouth must
surely have suggested the thought to
more than one Prime Minister that
something more than trawlers and
training ships is necessary if the prin-
ciple unanimously adopted by the
Conference is to be upheld."—Mon-
treal Daily Star, Nov. 13.

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