

not have fewer members in the elected house than it has in the appointed chamber. It was agreed that Barbados should have five members, Jamaica seventeen and Trinidad ten, while the other units should each have the minimum representation allowed.

The proposed federal plan left no doubt as to which of the two chambers should be the paramount legislative authority. Money bills may be introduced only in the House of Representatives and provision is made for overcoming a negative Senate vote. On other legislation the Senate would be empowered to delay for twelve months. The London Conference also agreed to empower the Governor General to reserve certain bills dealing with defence, external relations, and proposals which might lead to the need for financial assistance from the United Kingdom Government. A very limited power of disallowance would be granted to the Government of the United Kingdom.

Composition of the Council

The federal plan provided that the executive power of the Federation should be exercised by the Governor General on the advice of a Council of State, a body of 14 members consisting of the Prime Minister and seven persons of either of the chambers of the federal legislature chosen by him, three officials appointed by the Governor General, and three members of the federal Senate appointed by the Governor General in Council.

The delegates to the London Conference further agreed that the judicial power of the Federation should be vested in a Federal Supreme Court, and in such other courts as the federal legislature may create or invest with federal jurisdiction. The Federal Supreme Court should exercise appellate and original jurisdiction and have the power to interpret the provisions of the constitution.

Thus the federal plan as approved by the 1953 Conference called for the establishment of a federation with certain limitations on its independence of action primarily due to its expected dependence on the United Kingdom Government for grants-in-aid and assistance under the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts. The plan also visualized the creation of a comparatively weak central government in the first years of federation.

Developments Since the London Conference of 1953

By January 1955 the proposals of the 1953 Conference had been adopted by the legislatures of the territories which sent delegations to London. The Colonial Secretary then announced the establishment of three commissions to examine the fiscal, civil service and judicial aspects of federation.

While these commissions were being organized, a conference was convened in Trinidad in March 1955 to reach agreement on one of the most difficult problems confronting the Federation—the movement of persons and goods. Some of the more prosperous islands feared that unrestricted movement would result in serious dislocation of their economy; however, the conference agreed that the preamble to the constitution should emphasize the desirability of the greatest possible freedom of movement for persons and goods within the Federation and that control of movement between units should be exercised jointly by the Federal Government and by the units for the first five years after Federation. Beyond the five year limit the Conference recommended that any local legislation affecting movement of persons then in existence or enacted thereafter would require federal validation.