

Borden and General Smuts both came out strongly against the projects of imperial parliamentary federation which aggressive organizations in Britain and in some of the Dominions had been urging. The Conference of 1917 recorded its view that any coming readjustment must be based on a full recognition of the Dominions as autonomous nations of an imperial commonwealth; that it should recognize the right of the Dominions and of India to an adequate voice in foreign policy; and that it should provide effective arrangements for continuous consultation in all important matters of common concern and for such concerted action as the several Governments should determine. The policy of alliance, of coöperation between the Governments of the equal and independent states of the Empire, searchingly tested and amply justified by the war, had compelled assent.

The coming of peace gave occasion for a wider and more formal recognition of the new international status of the Dominions. It had first been proposed that the British Empire should appear as a unit, with the representatives of the Dominions present merely in an advisory capacity or participating in turn as members of the British delegation. The Dominion statesmen assembled