

TIGHT BINDING.

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prosperity of individual countries as well as to international peace. In order to assist in furthering this end, they declared themselves ready to co-operate with other nations in examining current difficulties, including trade barriers and other obstacles to the increase of international trade and the improvement of the general standard of living.

Finally the Members of the Conference, while themselves firmly attached to the principles of democracy and to parliamentary forms of government, decided to register their view that differences of political creed should be no obstacle to friendly relations between Governments and countries, and that nothing would be more damaging to the hopes of international appeasement than the division, real or apparent, of the world into opposing groups.

X.—DEFENCE.

The Conference gave close attention to the subject of defence, and considered ways in which it would be possible for the Governments concerned to co-operate in measures for their own security. The occasion was taken for a detailed review of the state of defence in each of the countries represented at the Conference and this opportunity was generally welcomed.

The discussions began with a review of the events which led up to the adoption by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom of their re-armament programme, and of defence problems generally. The Members of the Conference noted with deep concern that since the session of 1930, international tension had increased in a marked degree, and that there had been a large and rapid increase in the armaments of all the principal Powers. They were impressed by the world-wide effect of these increased armaments on the international situation and on the financial and economic position of the nations concerned, and while their respective Parliaments had already recognised the necessity for taking measures to put their defences in order, they thought it of the highest importance that negotiations for the limitation of armaments should be re-opened whenever there was a reasonable prospect of success. They recognised with regret that notwithstanding the measure of success in the limitation of armaments attained by the countries concerned in the London Treaty for the Limitation of Naval Armaments of 25th March, 1936, and in the Anglo-German Agreement of 18th June, 1935, international conditions were not at the moment favourable to further progress in the direction of disarmament. At the same time, however, they acclaimed the efforts now being made to extend naval limitation to other countries.

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The statements made to the Conference by the Delegation of the United Kingdom concerning the rearmament programme of the United Kingdom reported the further developments in the organisation of the Committee of Imperial Defence, notably in improving the arrangements for joint planning between the three Defence Services and for the mobilisation of industry. Facilities are always given to Dominion representatives to attend Meetings of the Committee of Imperial Defence, if they so desire, when questions of defence affecting their respective countries are under consideration. Attention was also drawn to the important progress made in recent years in the standardisation by the Governments concerned of the training and equipment of the defence forces in different parts of the Empire, as well as in uniformity of administrative practice in defence matters. Reference was made to the increasing importance of the industrial side of defence owing to the progress of technical development in armaments, and emphasis was placed on the advantages attending co-operation in the production and supply of munitions and raw materials as well as of food and feeding stuffs to meet the several requirements of the United Kingdom, the Dominions and India, and the Colonial Empire.

The discussion was continued by the Delegations representing the Dominions and India. The Conference was informed of the developments in the Canadian defence forces from 1926 to the present time. After considerable reductions in 1931 increased appropriations had recently been made for the Defence services of the Dominion. The strength of the Canadian naval and air forces had been increased, the militia had been completely reorganised and a policy of modernisation and mechanisation of equipment had been adopted. The industrial aspect of defence preparations had received close attention and a Committee of the Cabinet had been appointed to maintain active supervision of defence problems.

The defence organisation of the Commonwealth of Australia next received consideration. The basis of Australian defence policy was described as participation in Empire naval defence for the protection of sea-borne trade, as a deterrent to invasion and as a general measure of defence against raids, combined with local defence to provide a further deterrent to and a defence against invasion and raids. The great importance from the Australian point of view on the Singapore base was noticed. The Conference was informed of the large increases in the defence votes in Australia under a Three Years' Programme commenced in 1934 and that a new Four Years' Programme overlapping the last year of the other Programme had been put in hand. It was stated that the guiding principles of the Imperial Conferences of 1923 and 1926 had been adopted by His Majesty's Government in the Commonwealth of Australia as

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