

--if the mention of greater Colonies be deemed unfair to remainder of smaller Colonies, or otherwise objectionable, the addition to title might be "King of all the British Dominions Beyond the Seas".

That was the suggestion put forward to London at that time. We now reach the situation as it was at the time of the London Conference of 1926 when the title was found to be out of date because of the changed position of Ireland. A further alteration in the title was found to be required and the word "Ireland" was so interpreted as to distinguish geographically between the Irish Free State and Northern Ireland. Under the geographical umbrella of "British Dominions Beyond the Seas," the independent countries, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa, were lumped together with the colonies and other dependencies of the British Crown. In spite of certain misgivings as to the appropriateness of this title, it has remained and was reaffirmed by a United Kingdom statute and proclamation in 1936 at the time of the accession of King George VI.

Following the Second World War, the need for a further change in the Royal Style and titles became more apparent and when the prime ministers met, ... last December and on the eve of the coronation of Her Majesty, it was decided to make this change. The equality of status of the countries of the Commonwealth, if it needed further emphasis, was fully revealed by the part played by each in the Second World War. The entry into the Commonwealth of three fully independent Asian states, India, Pakistan, and Ceylon, not only greatly enhanced its membership but widened the basis of Commonwealth association. The establishment of the Republic of Ireland outside the Commonwealth made it clearly necessary to undertake a revision of the geographical content of the title which had been agreed to only a few years earlier. There were other equally cogent reasons for a change, not the least of which was the need for recognition in the title of the Sovereign's position as Head of the Commonwealth, a designation which had been agreed to a year or so before.

Therefore, in recent years, members of the Commonwealth have been considering, by exchanges of correspondence between governments and by meetings in London, ways and means of bringing the title into conformity with the constitutional relations which now exist within the Commonwealth. The discussions which took place last December when the prime ministers of the Commonwealth assembled in London were the result of long and careful consideration of how changes could be brought about in the Royal Style and titles which would make them appropriate to and practicable for the current Commonwealth relations, while maintaining the tradition and dignity associated with them.

Recognizing that the present title was not in accord with the current constitutional relations within the Commonwealth, they concluded, after full consideration, that in the present stage of development of the Commonwealth it would be in accord with the established constitutional practice--this represents an important change from any previous consideration of this matter-- that each member could subsequent to the conference use for its own purposes a form of title which suited its own particular circumstances but which retained a substantial element which was common to all.