

The Secretary of State for the Colonies announced his willingness to reorganize the Colonial Office so that it should in future include a special department for dealing with the affairs of the self-governing colonies and of the Imperial Conference. This settlement of the matter was eventually accepted.

Subsidiary
conferences.

An agreement was also arrived at with regard to subsidiary conferences on subjects which cannot be postponed, which require detailed consideration, or which involve consultation between two or more governments.

Constitution
of the Im-
perial Con-
ference.

These various decisions of the Conference were embodied in the form of a general resolution which was adopted unanimously as follows :

That it will be to the advantage of the Empire if a Conference, to be called the Imperial Conference, is held every four years, at which questions of common interest may be discussed and considered as between His Majesty's Government and His Governments of the self-governing Dominions beyond the seas. The Prime Minister of the United Kingdom will be ex-officio President, and the Prime Ministers of the self-governing Dominions ex-officio members of the Conference. The Secretary of State for the Colonies will be an ex-officio member of the Conference and will take the chair in the absence of the President. He will arrange for such Imperial Conferences after communication with the Prime Ministers of the respective Dominions.

Such other Ministers as the respective Governments may appoint will also be members of the Conference—it being understood that, except by special permission of the Conference, each discussion will be conducted by not more than two representatives from each Government, and that each Government will have only one vote.

That it is desirable to establish a system by which the several Governments represented shall be kept informed during the periods between the Conferences in regard to matters which have been or may be subjects for discussion, by means of a permanent secretarial staff, charged, under the direction of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, with the duty of obtaining information for the use of the Conference, of attending to its resolutions, and of conducting correspondence on matters relating to its affairs.

That upon matters of importance requiring consultation between two or more Governments which cannot conveniently be postponed until the next Conference, or involving subjects of a minor character or such as call for detailed consideration, subsidiary conferences should be held between representatives of the Governments concerned specially chosen for the purpose.

Imperial
defence.

The naval and military defence of the Empire was another important subject of discussion, and the Right Hon. R. B. Haldane, British Secretary of State for War, gave an exposition of the general principles underlying the present organization for the defence of the Empire. Resolutions were passed in favour of colonial representation on the Committee of Imperial Defence and affirming the need of developing a General Staff which, selected from the forces of the Empire as a whole, should study military science in all its branches, should undertake the preparation of schemes of defence upon a common principle, and should, at the request of the respective governments, advise as to the training, education and war organization of the military forces of the Crown in every part of the Empire.

Preferential
trade.

The question of preferential trade occupied a considerable portion of the time of the Conference, and the proceedings were notable for the emphatic declarations made by the members of the Home Government against the granting by the United