

Canada and the Peace Conferences.—Early during the war it had been announced in the various parliaments of the Empire that the Dominions would be fully consulted concerning the terms of peace. Agreeably with this understanding, on November 8, 1919, the Prime Minister (Sir Robert Borden), with three colleagues in the Ministry (Sir George Foster, Mr. C. J. Doherty and Mr. A. L. Sifton), left Ottawa to attend the peace deliberations, and upon their arrival in England the status of the Overseas Dominions at the forthcoming Peace Conference immediately came under consideration. Eventually a proposal by Sir Robert Borden was adopted to the effect that each of these Dominions should have distinctive representation similar to that accorded to the smaller Allied Powers, and that in addition the British Empire representation of five delegates should be selected from day to day from a panel made up of the representatives of the United Kingdom and the Dominions. Afterwards, at the preliminary Peace Conference begun at Paris on January 12, 1919, this proposal was accepted by the representatives of the principal Allied and Associated Powers. The adoption of the panel system gave to the Dominions especially effective representation. At plenary sessions of the Peace Conference there were sometimes three Canadian plenipotentiaries, two as representatives of Canada, and one as representative of the Empire.

Canadian ministers acted for the Empire on five different Allied Commissions upon special aspects of the conditions of peace. On several occasions the Canadian Premier attended as one of the British Empire representatives on the "Council of Five"; he also put forward the British Empire case in connection with certain questions before the "Council of Four", and at times he acted as Chairman of the British Empire Delegation in the absence of the British Prime Minister. Formerly, in the case of treaties in which the Empire was concerned, it had been the practice to insert an article or reservation providing for the adhesion of the Dominions; but another proposal of Sir Robert Borden's which was accepted was that, for the Treaty of Peace, the assent of the King as High Contracting Party should, in respect of the Dominions, be attested by the signatures of the Dominion plenipotentiaries. At the Peace Conference, where the Dominions enjoyed the same status as that of the minor powers, their representatives maintained that the Dominions should be similarly recognized in the international relationships contemplated by the League of Nations. The League of Nations Commission at first hesitated to concede the point, but finally did so. In the final draft of the Peace Treaty with Germany the status of the Dominions as to membership and representation in the Assembly and Council was fully recognized. The Peace Treaty with Germany was signed and sealed in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles on the afternoon of Saturday, June 28, 1919, when Mr. C. J. Doherty, Minister of Justice, and Mr. A. L. Sifton, Minister of Customs, in the absence of the Prime Minister and Sir George E. Foster in Canada, affixed their signatures as Canadian plenipotentiaries immediately after those of the five representatives of the United Kingdom. The Treaty of Peace between the Allied and Associated Powers and Austria was signed at