

SECTION X

THE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE OF COMMONWEALTH CONSULTATION AND CO-OPERATION IN WAR AND PEACE, TOGETHER WITH PROPOSALS FOR REFORM, 1940-8

1. Methods of War-time Co-operation, 1939-41. Faith in the Development of Existing Machinery as Opposed to the Revival of the Imperial War Cabinet

- (i) *Extract from a speech of the Prime Minister, the Right Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King, in the Canadian House of Commons, 17 February 1941¹*

. . . FROM time to time it has been suggested in Canada, in other of the dominions and also in Great Britain, that an imperial war cabinet or an imperial war council should be set up in London to give unified direction to the prosecution of the war by the nations of the British commonwealth. Those who advocate such a development are naturally thinking of what happened in the last war when such a body was found to be a useful and, indeed, a necessary instrument.

The imposing title undoubtedly has for many a certain appeal. An imperial war council composed of the prime ministers of the dominions and the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and presided over by the Prime Minister of Great Britain would in fact be an imposing body. It suggests, too, opportunities for direct and intimate conference in the shaping of a common policy for the prosecution of the war in which the whole commonwealth has so vital a concern. It may be premature to speak of such a proposal inasmuch as the British House of Commons was informed as recently as December last that 'the Prime Minister does not contemplate adding representatives of the dominions to the war cabinet at the present time.'² The matter, however, is one which from time to time has received careful consideration. It was discussed at the beginning of the war when Mr. Chamberlain was in office, and has been considered on several occasions since. A moment may come when it will be both desirable and necessary for a conference of the kind to be held in London, or in some other part of the British empire. At present it must be obvious that with the war presenting new and most serious problems to each and every part, in no place can the presence of a prime minister be more necessary or helpful to all concerned than in his own country. The

¹ Canada, H. of C. Deb., 1941, vol. 1, pp. 811-13.

² 3 December 1940, H. of C. Deb., vol. 367, col. 435.

proposal can best be judged by one simple test. Is it the most effective means of achieving the desired end? All other considerations must be put aside. Perhaps the best way of approaching the subject is to ask ourselves how the end is now achieved. It is true that there is nothing imposing about the means which are employed. It may, nevertheless, be said that at this very time such a council exists in reality, although it has no visible form.

The matters of high policy, which in the imperial war council of the last war were considered around the council table by the heads of the several governments of the British empire, are today discussed between them by direct communication. The means and agencies of communication, in the intervening years have alike been materially improved. The cable has been supplemented by the wireless and the transatlantic telephone. Each dominion has today its department of external affairs efficiently organized and in a position instantly to supplement the information essential as a background to the discussion of any problem. Not only is each government represented in London by its own special agent—a high commissioner—but the British government is also represented by a high commissioner in each of the dominions.

There are thus, so to speak, three sending and three receiving sources, through each of which special classes of communications are sent and received: (a) from prime minister to prime minister direct—those which relate to matters of high policy; (b) through the secretary of state for dominion affairs to the secretary of state for external affairs, and vice versa—matters more general in character and relating more particularly to information in detail on operations, and the progress of the war; (c) and finally, special communications supplementing those from the sources mentioned from the high commissioner to the prime minister, or to the secretary of state for external affairs and vice versa.

I might mention that in each of the dominions there are similar means and methods of consultation and communication. We are fortunate in having in our capital at this time distinguished representatives from all of the other dominions with the exception thus far, I think, of New Zealand. We have with us in the capital, as hon. members know, Mr. de Waal Meyer, as the representative of South Africa; Mr. Hearne, as the High Commissioner for Ireland; and Sir William Glasgow as High Commissioner for Australia. In these countries we are also represented by our high commissioners—in South Africa by Mr. Laureys, in Ireland by Mr. Hall Kelly, in Australia by Mr. Burchell, and in New Zealand by Dr. Riddell. There is not a day passes that communications in considerable number do not pass back and forth between Great Britain and Canada, many of which are identical with some of those sent to the other dominions. Communications sent by us to London which are likely to be of interest to the other dominions are also sent to the dominions. At the present time there are means of effective communication

and consultation in all matters pertaining to the war much more comprehensive than anything which existed during the last war. I doubt, indeed, if a more efficient arrangement could possibly be made.

The real but invisible imperial council made possible by these means of constant and instantaneous conference has one all-important advantage which would be denied to an imperial war council sitting in London. It affords the prime minister of each of the dominions the opportunity of discussing immediately with his colleagues in his own cabinet all aspects of every question raised. His expression of view, when given, is not his alone—it is the expression of view of the cabinet of which he is the head. It is an expression of view given by the cabinet in the light of its responsibility to parliament. It is, moreover, an expression of view given in the atmosphere, not of London, but of the dominion itself.

In war time, most decisions have to be made quickly. On that score alone, let me compare the two methods. If the prime ministers of the dominions were meeting in an imperial war cabinet in London, they would have either to act on their own exclusive responsibility without regard to their colleagues, or, alternatively, to hold up proceedings while they communicated with their governments at home. On the other hand, the existing arrangements permit the prime minister to consult his colleagues at once when any matter is communicated to him from another commonwealth government which requires an immediate decision. A decision can be reached at once with the secure knowledge that it represents authoritatively and finally the government as a whole.

Direct consultations have been and may continue to be necessary from time to time. They, however, are likely to be most required concerning aspects of the common war effort which necessitate detailed inquiry. Five members of the present government have already visited the United Kingdom since the outbreak of the war. Their visits have been of the greatest assistance to the government in coordinating our war effort with the war effort of the United Kingdom. I believe that these visits, supplementing as they do the regular channels of communication I have described, serve the common cause more effectively than arrangements which would be more formal and imposing.

There is an even more important consideration. Situations, as I have already said, are constantly arising which affect different parts of the British Commonwealth in different ways. To meet these situations, the presence of the prime minister in immediate contact with his colleagues in his own country is of the highest importance. Such a situation was that occasioned for Canada by the sudden collapse of France. Such a situation is that which at the moment is presenting itself in the orient.

I think I have only to ask hon. members of this House of Commons if they were, at the moment, called upon to decide whether it would be better to have the Prime Minister of Canada attending at the present time a council in

London or to have him here in this House of Commons in immediate association with his colleagues and in a position to confer with them, not only from day to day, and hour to hour, but from moment to moment; whether they would not consider, in a situation such as exists at this time, that it is better for him to be here at the head of the government, and at the head of the country which has elected him to office. I believe this would equally be the view of the government and the people of the United Kingdom.

The possibility of immediate personal contact between the Prime Minister of Canada and the President of the United States, in critical situations affecting the relations between the United States and the British commonwealth, may easily be more important to the common cause than any service which a prime minister of Canada could render at the council table in London.

The united national support of each dominion for its war effort will continue throughout the war to be more important than all else. Under constantly changing conditions, that unity will, I believe, be better maintained by the presence of the prime minister at the head of the administration at home than at the council table in London. What I have said about the Prime Minister of Canada applies, I believe, equally to the prime ministers of the other self-governing dominions. I am looking at the situation as we all know it to be at the present moment. I ask hon. members to consider whether the people of South Africa or the people of the United Kingdom would wish to have General Smuts in London at the present time, or would prefer to have him where he is in South Africa. I must ask a similar question with respect to the prime ministers of the other dominions.

It has also been suggested that the Canadian cabinet should be enlarged to include a minister for overseas affairs who would reside in London and have immediate charge of all Canadian war activities in the United Kingdom and elsewhere overseas. This suggestion is based on the practice in the last war when, for special reasons then existing, such a minister was found necessary by the government of the day. There are several reasons why the present government has felt that no such appointment is now desirable. In the first place, the office of the high commissioner in London is well organized and well staffed. The high commissioner himself has had a long experience in dealing with the various departments of the British government. A new appointee, without Mr. Massey's experience, could not possibly discharge these functions so well. Moreover, in view of the wholly satisfactory, indeed, the splendid services Mr. Massey has been rendering in his present position, the appointment of an overseas minister could scarcely be regarded as other than a reflection upon the high commissioner. Mr. Massey himself is a member of the Canadian privy council. His membership in the cabinet could add little to his authority.

It may even be questioned whether membership in the cabinet would not be embarrassing to the Canadian government representative in London, as

well as the government itself. If he were in the cabinet, his slightest word would probably be regarded as the opinion of Canada. It would be difficult and awkward for him either to refer questions to his colleagues in Ottawa, or not to refer them. If he made a practice of consulting his colleagues, he would seem to have little authority himself; if he failed to consult them, the result would be divided responsibility and uncertainty of jurisdiction, which could hardly fail to have unfortunate results.

It is the opinion of the government that Canadian interests in London and co-operation with the United Kingdom are better served by the system of consultation I have already described and by the present arrangement of having a high commissioner permanently resident there, and by the occasional visits of ministers from the cabinet at Ottawa who do not remain long enough to lose contact with Canadian conditions and the circumstances with which the government is contending at home. I might add that not the least significant of the achievements in Canada's war effort thus far has been the close cooperation and whole-hearted good-will which has characterized the relations between Canadian civil and military authorities in London and between the Canadian and British authorities there, as well as between the Canadian and British governments.

(ii) *Extracts from speeches of Viscount Elibank and the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, the Right Hon. the Viscount Cranborne (Lord Cecil), in the House of Lords, 2 April 1941*¹

(a) *Viscount Elibank* proposed the motion: To ask His Majesty's Government whether they will consider in consultation with the Governments concerned the desirability of forming an Imperial War Council, consisting of (1) the Prime Ministers of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland, and of the Dominions and Southern Rhodesia or their representatives; (2) a representative of India and (3) a representative of the Colonies and Protectorates; further, that the function of the Imperial War Council shall be to co-ordinate action, so far as possible, upon major questions of Imperial policy arising out of the war and in settle[ment] of the peace; . . . I am, after further consideration, asking His Majesty's Government, in consultation with the Governments of the Empire, to establish an Imperial War Council on the lines laid down in my Motion. In the last war there was, as in this war, a War Cabinet. This War Cabinet was in frequent session. In addition there was an Imperial War Cabinet which met less frequently, but, as was stated in an official statement issued on August 18, it really became active in the last year of the war. It was recorded in that statement that the Imperial War Cabinet had been in continual session for two and a half months, and that all aspects of policy affecting the conduct of the war and the question of peace had been examined by the Prime Ministers of the Empire and other members representative of all its

¹ H. of L. Deb., vol. 118, coll. 952-6.

parts. In this war, as in the last war, we have a War Cabinet which sits constantly, but we have got no counterpart of the Imperial War Cabinet which was so valuable in the last war. I submit that the necessity for one in this war is even greater than in the last war.

I am advocating the creation of an Imperial War Council rather than an Imperial War Cabinet, on this occasion, because I believe it is more in keeping with the conditions which at present exist and with the developments in the Empire during the last ten or fifteen years. My noble friend Lord Davies would prefer me to call it a Supreme War Council and I certainly will not quarrel with him over that term, because I should be quite content if it were named a Supreme War Council so long as it achieves as I believe it probably would achieve, what I have in aim, that is, co-ordinated co-operation within the Empire on major questions of war policy and of the peace settlement. As I have just said, it seems to me more necessary in this war to have a War Council representative of the Empire than it was in the last war. . . .

I may probably be told in reply that there is already sufficiently close co-operation between the Government of this country and the Governments of the Dominions, and that, through daily informal conferences held between the Secretary of State for the Dominions—who, I am glad to know, will be responding to my Motion—and the High Commissioners, as well as through weekly informal conferences between the High Commissioners themselves, all is done that is required for this purpose. In this connexion, I should like to pay tribute to the High Commissioners, all of whom are gentlemen most able and distinguished, and naturally held in the highest respect, both in this country and by the Governments they represent. I do not in the least underestimate the value of these informal conferences. They are, and they must be, most valuable, and I do not even suggest that if and when, as I hope it may, an Imperial War Council shall be established these conferences shall be done away with during the time that the Council is in session. In fact, I hope that they may continue in between times, but I have no hesitation in saying that in the circumstances which I have described these informal conferences do not, and cannot, always go far enough, and they do not, and cannot, achieve the unity of purpose and decision or the results which would be secured by a regularized body of Empire statesmen sitting and acting together under directly responsible conditions.

Moreover (and I mention this with some diffidence in the presence of my noble friend Lord Cecil), there is an obvious disability in the present system, in that the Secretary of State for the Dominions is not a member of the War Cabinet. I venture to suggest that he should be, and I am sure the Dominions would appreciate it if such action were taken. The Secretary of State for the Dominions is, therefore, not always present at the meetings of the War Cabinet, and the information which is received by the High Commissioners from him at the daily conferences must sometimes be third hand and not even second hand.

That is an unsatisfactory state of affairs which I am sure your Lordships will agree ought to be remedied.

(b) *The Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs (Lord Cecil)*:¹ . . . The Government certainly have no reason to complain of the noble Viscount having raised this question, for clearly, as he himself said, it is of the very first importance, not only from the point of view of our war effort but from the point of view of the future of the British Commonwealth of Nations, that at this particular and severe crisis in our history there should be the closest possible co-operation between Great Britain and the Dominions overseas. My only doubt as I listened to his speech was whether even now the noble Viscount fully realizes how close and constant that collaboration already is. He referred to one channel of communication, the daily interviews which I have with the Dominion High Commissioners, but there are not merely one channel but three channels of communication. There are first of all the United Kingdom High Commissioners in the Dominions who are in the closest possible contact both with the Dominion Prime Ministers and with the Dominion Governments.

Viscount Elibank: May I be allowed to interrupt? Does that mean that the High Commissioner in Canada, Mr. Malcolm MacDonald, has not gone there under the same conditions as the late High Commissioner in an industrial capacity, but that he will be looking after political and diplomatic questions as well?

Lord Cecil: That is not a true account of the functions of the High Commissioner in a Dominion. He communicates with the Dominion Government on any question on which His Majesty's Government may wish to have communication. He is not confined in any way to purely industrial functions, and never has been. To these High Commissioners go every day a stream of telegrams giving the latest information of the progress of events in the war. They also, of course, have the task of taking up with the Dominion Governments any questions which in the view of His Majesty's Government are better handled at the Dominions end. That is the first channel of communication. The second is the Dominion High Commissioners here in London. They perform, of course, to a great extent the same functions with regard to any matters which in the view of their Government are better dealt with and raised here on the spot in London. They are also in the very closest contact possible both with the Dominions Office and with the other offices of State.

I attach, personally, the very greatest importance to my daily contacts with the High Commissioners. I think they are an essential point of liaison between the Government here and the Dominions. I see the High Commissioners every day of the week, and I should be seeing them at this moment if it were not for this debate. I see them also, when the situation demands it, every week-end. I give them all the latest information—confidential, official information—on the international situation, and I also keep them in touch with the decisions and

¹ H. of L. Deb., vol. 118, col. 966-71.

deliberations of the Government and the War Cabinet on matters affecting the Dominions. I would say in passing that it is not quite true to say I do not attend the meetings of the War Cabinet. It is true I am not a member of the War Cabinet, but I attend the meetings for the very reason which the noble Viscount himself stated, that so alone am I able to keep the Dominions in the closest possible touch with events. I would like to take the opportunity of saying how very useful I believe these meetings to be and how very deeply indebted I am to the Dominion High Commissioners for their constant help and collaboration. As your Lordships will appreciate, these day-to-day contacts are of the first importance to ensure that every development of the international situation is passed direct to the Dominion Governments. Moreover, I often receive personal suggestions from the High Commissioners of the utmost value which I am able to pass on to the Cabinet or to the Departments concerned.

Finally, there is the direct channel of communication, from Prime Minister to Prime Minister, or else from myself to my opposite numbers in the Dominions. That is, of course, the normal channel for the communication of information and views on matters of common concern between the various sections of the British Commonwealth, and it affords a valuable background for the closer personal contact which the High Commissioners themselves are able to maintain.

These three channels, which I have very briefly described, do, I think, provide a full and complete system of liaison between the Home Government and the Dominion Governments. In addition, superimposed upon that system, there are the frequent visits of Dominions Ministers to this country. During the comparatively short period that I have had the good fortune to be at the Dominions Office there have been several of these visits. Last October there was a visit from Mr. Gardiner, the Canadian Minister for Agriculture, and early this year, as your Lordships will know, we had visits from Colonel Ralston, the Canadian Minister of Defence, and Mr. C. D. Howe, the Canadian Minister of Munitions. On the occasion of these visits discussions of very real value took place between representatives of the two Governments. Further we have now, as your Lordships will be aware, a visit by Mr. R. G. Menzies, the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia. We are very glad, everybody is very glad, to welcome him to this country after a long and very adventurous journey in which, I believe, he visited every unit of the Australian troops in the Army of the Nile.

Since he has been here he has taken his full part as a Dominion Prime Minister in the deliberations of the War Cabinet, and has had numerous—I might almost say innumerable—meetings with members of the Government and their expert advisers. He has also had the opportunity of visiting our industrial centres and districts which have suffered very heavily from bombing. I am quite sure he will take back to Australia, when he goes back as he will very shortly, a complete picture of our war effort and of the situation as it now presents itself. His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have had the

great advantage of personal contact and consultation with him. We have derived very real benefit from the exchanges of views which have taken place.

I would also remind your Lordships of the conversations which have taken place lately between General Smuts and the Foreign Secretary in the Middle East. Anyone who knows that great soldier-statesman will realize how immensely valuable those discussions have proved to be. Finally, I am glad to confirm what has been already stated that Mr. Fraser, the Prime Minister of New Zealand, at the invitation of His Majesty's Government, hopes shortly to come on a visit to this country. We look forward very greatly to the opportunity for consultation and exchange of views which his visit will afford and no doubt he will attend the War Cabinet in the same way that Mr. Menzies has done. The importance of these visits of Dominion Ministers cannot, in my view, be over-estimated. Not only does it enable them to clear up outstanding and obstinate points which must arise at all times between two Governments but it enables them also to assess the situation on the spot, and when they go back to their own countries they can speak with personal experience and authority. I gather that the noble Viscount, Lord Elibank, suggests that this present machinery of Imperial collaboration should be extended still further by the formation of an Imperial War Council with representatives from every Dominion and collective representation of the Colonies and one for India. This Council, would, as I understand him, remain in permanent session.

Lord Elibank: My Lords, if I may be forgiven for interrupting, what I meant to convey was that that Council should sit from time to time and later on perhaps a great deal more, while in the meantime this machinery of informal conferences should continue.

Lord Cecil: I need not say that His Majesty's Government are, of course, heartily in favour, in principle, of anything which is likely to lead to closer collaboration between the various sections of the British Commonwealth. But I hardly think that at the present moment the particular proposal which the noble Lord has in mind would be practically possible. It would involve each Dominion seconding for duty here a very important Minister—for he would have to be a very important Minister—who could ill be spared from his own country. Nor could such a Minister, however important, as my noble friend Lord Gifford has already said, take decisions over the head of his own Government. Every decision that was taken by this sort of Council would have to be a decision *ad referendum*. In fact, the Council would be an Imperial War Council only in name. Moreover, these Dominion representatives, valuable though they would be, would, I think, tend to a certain extent to get out of touch with affairs in their own home countries, and to that extent their value would be minimized. I do suggest that, at any rate for the present, and having regard to the present stage of the war, the existing arrangements reinforced, as they are at frequent intervals, by visits of Dominion Ministers is the most valuable and useful method of managing our affairs.

On the other hand, there are circumstances and situations in which conferences with Dominion Prime Ministers could be of the utmost value. A point, for instance, may be reached in the war when we are able to look a little more into the future than we can at the present time and at such a moment an Imperial Conference might not only be important but essential. Up to now, for reasons which your Lordships' House appreciates, in the view of the Government, that moment has not yet come. But should the situation so alter as to make it possible to hold a conference of this kind I can assure the House that the Government would most heartily welcome it. In the meantime, I hope that your Lordships will not fall into the illusion of thinking that the present system works badly. It does not; it works very well. The noble Marquess, Lord Crewe, asked whether there had been any demand from any Dominion Government for alteration in the system. We have had no request, intimation or demand of any kind. I have seen no communication from any Dominion Government implying that a change is desirable. On the contrary, all that I have heard from the Dominion Governments has indicated their satisfaction with the present situation.

(iii) *Extracts from speeches of the Prime Minister, the Right Hon. R. G. Menzies, and the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. J. Curtin, in the Australian House of Representatives, 20-21 August 1941*

(a) *The Right Hon. R. G. Menzies (Prime Minister):*¹ . . . My colleagues in the Cabinet have, as a result of recent discussions, asked me to pay another visit to London. Having regard to the balance of parties in Parliament, I have indicated that it would not be practicable for me to go abroad at present, except with the approval of all parties.

Therefore I propose to ask honorable members to attend party meetings at which the proposal can be discussed.

In the meantime, all that I need say is this: The war is characterized by extraordinarily sudden changes and developments. Less than three months have elapsed since I returned to Australia, but in that time we have seen the invasion of Russia by Germany, the conquest of Syria by British forces; the Japanese occupation of French Indo-China, with all the tension consequent upon it, and the momentous meeting between the Prime Minister of Great Britain and the President of the United States of America. Each of these events has a great interest and significance for Australia.

The events in Russia and the Middle East may well affect the whole strategy of the Middle Eastern zone; the occupation of French Indo-China, coupled with the subsequent discussions between Japan and Thailand, are clearly of first-class importance to Singapore and Australia, to say nothing of the Netherlands East Indies. Both matters, taken together, raise questions as to the disposition, maintenance and equipment of Australian overseas armies. The meeting between the Prime Minister and the President has opened up a new

¹ Australia, H. of R. Deb., vol. 168, pp. 10-11.

vista of British-American collaboration, not only in the field of military supply but also in the economic field generally. In all these matters, it is, in the opinion of my colleagues and myself, of great importance that Australia's voice should be directly heard in the place in which the major decisions are inevitably made.

When I say this, I do not offer any criticism of the Prime Minister of Great Britain or of his War Cabinet. In my visit earlier in the year, I found them in the highest degree co-operative, willing to listen to the Australian view, willing to attach significance and weight to special Australian interests. But it is still true that each member of this British Commonwealth of Nations has its own method of approach; its own point of view. The best results for the British Empire as a whole will be achieved by having matters of high war policy which concern any particular dominion discussed freely and frankly at the right place by an authoritative spokesman of that dominion. Experience has shown this, and I doubt whether anybody would deny it.

Nobody recognizes more clearly than I do the impracticability of a Prime Minister of Australia being indefinitely, or for a prolonged period, absent from his own country; but that limitation in point of time leaves the force of the general proposition quite unimpaired.

May I just add a few words about the suggestion which has been made in some quarters that an Australian Minister other than the Prime Minister, whoever the Prime Minister may be, can automatically occupy a seat in Mr. Churchill's War Cabinet. This suggestion lacks foundation. Honorable members will at once perceive that if one dominion can claim such a position as of right, so can all the dominions, and if that claim were granted the British War Cabinet would be very greatly enlarged.

In the course of the war, the British Prime Minister has made it clear that as a matter of courtesy between the self-governing portions of the Empire, any visiting Prime Minister will be welcomed at meetings of his War Cabinet. But there is no warrant for the belief that such a rule can be extended merely at the will of a particular dominion. I say nothing at this stage about the merits of dominions representation in the British War Cabinet. I merely point out that it is a problem which would normally no doubt be discussed at an Imperial Conference, if the holding of such a conference were practicable. If an Australian Minister who goes to London for purposes connected with the discussion of war policy and related matters is not to be a member of the War Cabinet, he will largely duplicate, without necessarily improving, the work of the High Commissioner.

(b) *Mr. J. Curtin:* . . . This morning, the Federal Parliamentary Labour party assembled, and adopted the following declaration:—

The Labour Party declares—

(1) That, having regard to the gravity of the war as it affects the Commonwealth,

* Australia, H. of R. Deb., vol. 168, pp. 77-79.

it is essential for Australia to have its Prime Minister here to direct the administration in the organization of a total war effort, and therefore we are opposed to the present proposal that the Prime Minister (Mr. Menzies) should proceed to London as Prime Minister;

(2) That arrangements be made with the British Government for representation for the Commonwealth Government in England, so as to ensure that its point of view in respect of war policy will be constantly before the British War Cabinet. . . .

Although we consider that our necessities make it imperative for the Prime Minister of Australia to remain in this country in order to deal—as our declaration says—with the Administration in Australia, and with all the very complicated problems which we ourselves have to resolve in order not only to do our utmost in our own defence, but also to contribute to the common cause, none the less, we feel that Australia is entitled to have its view constantly placed before the British War Cabinet. The Parliament, the Government, and the people of Australia are warranted, in view of all that Australia has done, is doing, and proposes to do, in saying to the Government of the United Kingdom:

We desire to have our view of war policy placed before the Cabinet in Great Britain by such a representative as we deem most suitable for the purpose, having regard to the other work which has to be done in Australia. Whilst in the past it has been a matter of general practice that the Prime Minister of Australia should, as a gesture of courtesy, be admitted to the discussions of the British War Cabinet, in order to place before it the view of Australia, the exigencies of the war now make it necessary that that gentleman shall remain in Australia to lead his Administration. Therefore, as it is important that our view should be put before you, we ask you to accept, not the representative of Australia that you would choose, but the representative of Australia which the Australian Government may choose.

Whether or not that will be acceptable to the Government of the United Kingdom, the Opposition makes that declaration as representing its view of what is right, having regard to all the circumstances. . . .

The Prime Minister has said that it would not be practicable for him to go abroad without the approval of all parties. The Labour party does not give its approval. At the same time, we are quite ready, not merely to agree, but also to urge, that there should be provided by the Government of the United Kingdom means whereby the opinion of Australia shall be constantly placed before the War Cabinet. My own belief is that it cannot be done by a Minister who would be absent from Australia for some long period of time. The progress of this war produces changes, sometimes from day to day, and, as events shape themselves, it may be necessary for us to be represented in England by somebody closely conversant with the actual position in Australia—with the position in regard to our resources in men, the places where they should be used, our resources of raw material, our manufacturing capacity, the extent to which we are dependent on production in other places, and the shipping that is available between the various collaterals. All these matters require to be reviewed from

day to day, and involve immediate communication with Australia's representative in London, so that the British War Cabinet, if it does things which we do not like, will at least do them with a full understanding of what Australia wants. The Prime Minister, since his return to Australia, gave to this Parliament and to the country a prospectus for an unlimited war effort, and we are awaiting the taking of the necessary steps to ensure that our war effort is appropriately accelerated. With great respect to the right honorable gentleman, I say that the Prime Minister of this country at this time has such important work to do here and now that our representation in the British War Cabinet must be left to some one else.

(iv) *Telegram from the Prime Minister, the Right Hon. W. S. Churchill, to the Prime Minister of Australia, Mr. W. A. Padden, 29 August 1941*¹

Now that you have taken up your great office, I send you my most cordial good wishes for success, and assure you that I and my colleagues will do everything in our power to work with you in the same spirit of comradeship and goodwill as we worked with Mr. Menzies, who, we are so glad to see, is serving under you as Minister for the Co-ordination of Defence.

2. We have followed attentively the difficulties which have arisen in Australia about your representation over here, and perhaps it will be a help if I let you see our side of the question and how we are situated.

3. Since the declarations of the Imperial Conference of 1926, embodied in the Statute of Westminster, all Dominion Governments are equal in status to that of the Mother Country, and all have direct access to the Crown. The Cabinet of His Majesty's Government of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, of which at present I have the honour to be the head, is responsible to our own Parliament, and is appointed by the King because they possess a majority in the House of Commons. It would not be possible therefore, without organic changes, about which all the Dominions would have to be consulted, to make an Australian Minister who is responsible to the Commonwealth legislature a member of our body. The precedent of General Smuts in the last war does not apply, because he was an integral member of the War Cabinet of those days, appointed by the King because of his personal aptitudes, and not because he represented the South African or Dominions point of view.

4. In practice however whenever a Dominion Prime Minister visits this country—and they cannot visit it too often or too long—he is always invited to sit with us and take a full part in our deliberations. This is because he is the head of the Government of one of our sister Dominions, engaged with us in the common struggle, and has presumably the power to speak with the authority of the Dominion concerned, not only on instructions from home, but upon many issues which may arise in the course of discussion. This is a great advantage to us, and speeds up business.

¹ *The Second World War*, vol. 3 (London, Cassell, 1950), pp. 758-60.

5. The position of a Dominion Minister other than the Prime Minister would be very different, as he would not be a principal, but only an envoy. Many Dominions Ministers other than Prime Ministers have visited us from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and South Africa during the present war, and I am always ready to confer with them or put them in the closest touch with the Ministers of the various departments with which they are concerned. In the normal course the Secretary of State for the Dominions and the High Commissioner for the Dominion concerned look after them, and secure them every facility for doing any work they may have to do. This arrangement has given satisfaction, so far as I am aware, to all concerned.

6. I have considered the suggestion that each of the Dominions should have a Minister other than the Prime Minister sitting with us in the Cabinet of the United Kingdom during this time of war. I have learnt from the Prime Ministers of the Dominions of Canada, South Africa, and New Zealand that they do not desire such representation and are well content with our present arrangements. Some of the Dominion Prime Ministers have indeed taken a very strongly adverse view, holding that no one but the Prime Minister can speak for their Governments except as specifically instructed, and that they might find their own liberty of action prejudiced by any decisions, some of which have to be made very quickly in wartime, to which their Minister became a party.

7. From our domestic point of view, as His Majesty's servants in the United Kingdom, there are many difficulties. We number at present eight, and there has been considerable argument that we should not be more than five. The addition of four Dominion representatives would involve the retirement from the War Cabinet of at least an equal number of British Ministers. Dwelling within a Parliamentary and democratic system, we rest, like you do, upon a political basis. I should not myself feel able, as at present advised, to recommend to His Majesty either the addition of four Dominions Ministers to the Cabinet of the United Kingdom, which would make our numbers too large for business, or the exclusion of a number of my present colleagues, who are the leading men in the political parties to which they belong.

8. If you desire to send anyone from Australia as a special envoy to discuss any particular aspect of our common war effort, we should of course welcome him with the utmost consideration and honour, but he would not be, and could not be, a responsible partner in the daily work of our Government.

9. His relationship with the existing High Commissioner for Australia and with the Secretary of State for the Dominions would be for you to decide. It would seem however if such an envoy remained here as a regular institution that the existing functions of the High Commissioner would to some extent be duplicated, and the relations of the Secretary of State with the High Commissioners generally might be affected. Such difficulties are not insuperable, but they may as well be faced. The whole system of the work of the High

Commissioners in daily contact with the Secretary of State for the Dominions has worked well, and I am assured that the three other Dominions would be opposed to any change.

10. We should of course welcome a meeting of Dominion Prime Ministers if that could be arranged, but the difficulties of distance and occasion are, as you know, very great. We are also quite ready to consider, if you desire it, the question of the formation of an Imperial War Cabinet. So far-reaching a change could not however be brought about piecemeal, but only by the general wish of all the Governments now serving His Majesty.

2. *The Creation of Machinery to Co-ordinate War Production and to Allocate Supplies*

(i) *The Eastern Supply Council. Extracts from a speech by His Excellency the Governor-General of India, the Marquess of Linlithgow, at the opening of the Eastern Group Conference at New Delhi, 25 October 1940*¹

*Lord Linlithgow:*² The need for a Conference such as this has long been apparent to those who have studied the organization of the British Commonwealth of Nations for a protracted war; and from the ready response to the invitations which I was recently authorized by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to send out, I judge that other Empire Governments in this part of the world are as eager as the Government of India to make the Conference a living part of our war effort.

India may congratulate herself on her fortunate geographical position; for her the occasion is historic, and on behalf of my Government and the people of India I extend a very cordial welcome to the visiting Delegations. I also welcome the Ministry of Supply Mission whose opportune arrival in India will enable the Conference to benefit by the advice of Sir Alexander Roger and his colleagues. I am glad, too, to think that we shall have available to us the advice of the strong and representative body of non-official advisers from India who are present here today.

I would not have it thought here or elsewhere that the holding of the Conference implies any failure of the members of the 'Eastern Group' of Empire countries to help one another in the war effort. Indeed, we in India have been much impressed by the eagerness of other Empire Governments to help us, and we hope that we for our part have done our best to meet such demands as they have made upon us.

¹ Countries represented at the Conference were Australia, Burma, Ceylon, East African Colonies, Great Britain (Ministry of Supply Mission), Hong Kong, India, Malaya, New Zealand, Palestine, South Africa, and Southern Rhodesia.

² V. A. J. Hope, 2nd Marquess of Linlithgow, *Speeches and Statements, 1936-43* (New Delhi, Bureau of Public Information, Government of India, 1945), pp. 256-60.

What the Conference does imply is something very different—a determination not merely to help one another, but to pool our resources so that we may as a group of Governments and countries put forth the greatest material war effort that we can.

The idea underlying the Conference is by no means new; it arises from the Imperial Conference of 1937. But its urgency has been borne in upon us more particularly during the past six months. Many of the countries represented here played a great part in the War of 1914-18, contributing without stint men, money and material. In that war, however, material resources, though of great importance, were considerably less important than they are today, and it is probably true that the outlying Empire countries concentrated very largely upon manpower and the simpler forms of equipment, relying upon the highly organized industries of the United Kingdom and her Allies to do the rest.

When the present war began we knew that conditions would be very different, but we could not foresee the fall of Norway, Denmark, Holland, and Belgium; and the destruction of France as a military power and ally in Europe. The British Empire now fights alone, and must not only find the men and material to defend the United Kingdom against invasion, but provide for the defence of her outlying members, and for the equipment of the remnants of the forces of her conquered Allies.

The Conference therefore, while having a precedent in the Imperial Conference of 1937, nevertheless falls into a category almost unique in the political experience of the British Commonwealth.

It represents the active collaboration of a part of the Commonwealth in the interests of the whole; it implies that those parts of the Empire which lie east and south of Suez are about to investigate the assumption of new responsibilities, which will lighten the burden on the Mother Country at a time when she is preoccupied with difficult problems peculiar to the present phase of the war; and it reflects those qualities of resiliency and adaptability which are a characteristic feature of our political institutions, for it means that those units of the Commonwealth which are situated in the Eastern hemisphere are ready and willing to associate themselves with policies in which self-interest and self-assertion are relegated to second place in face of the menace that is confronting the Commonwealth as a whole.

The spread of the war in the direction of the Middle East cannot disrupt the political integrity of the Commonwealth, because that integrity is rooted in freedom and justice which are component elements of that political philosophy which imbues all sections of the Commonwealth. A threat to any part of the Commonwealth is a threat to the whole and the immediate danger is being faced at present in the Mother Country.

In this situation our first plain duty is to relieve the United Kingdom of such of her burdens as we can bear ourselves, and I suggest that we can best do this by preparing a joint scheme showing clearly how far, viewed not as

individual Governments and countries, but as a group, we are capable of meeting our own war needs and of supplying in increasing measure the war needs of the United Kingdom.

The task of the Conference is, in brief, the preparation of such a scheme, and my Government and I are under no illusions as to the complexity of your deliberations. All or almost all the countries represented here are producers of raw materials; some are fortunate in possessing more or less highly organized industries; and some are able to manufacture munitions of war on a fairly large scale. It will be for the Delegations to declare the strengths and weaknesses of their respective countries, and for the Conference as a whole to say how far the deficiencies of one country can be made good by the actual or potential surplus of another.

It is possible that in respect of certain items of supply no planning may be needed; but there will, I believe, be room for planning and 'rationalization' over a very wide field. The Conference clearly cannot stop short at recommending a comparatively easy exchange of raw materials and manufactured articles; it will have to consider the position of the participating countries as a group and the best methods of making the group self-supporting.

You may find when you come to consider the establishment of new manufactures, that it is convenient that one or more countries within the group should concentrate upon particular items and that some general allocation of industrial responsibility will be inevitable. Again you may find that all the countries in the group are short of certain essentials, and the means of securing these will have to be planned.

The procedure by which the Conference will approach and solve these important problems is, of course, for the Conference to decide. Many of the problems to be discussed are, in their detailed aspects, a matter for experts, and I should like to make it clear that my Government intends to make available to individual Delegations and to the Conference as a whole all the expert assistance at its command whether of an official or non-official character. . . .

As I have already indicated it is a new conception of our Commonwealth ideals which will be reflected in your deliberations here. There is something significant, even dramatic, in the thought of Great Britain bravely bearing the brunt of the enemy's attacks while her kinsmen and associated peoples in the East are marshalling their forces for that ultimate victory which will bring an end to aggression and to that depravity of the soul which accompanies totalitarianism.

(ii) *The Commonwealth Supply Council. Its constitution and functions as announced on 28 October 1942**

The first meeting of the Commonwealth Supply Council, which has been formed to co-ordinate the arrangements for supply throughout the Empire,

* *The Times*, 29 October 1942.

was held yesterday. The Council's aim will be to bring together and develop existing machinery in order to assist and co-ordinate the common war effort in every possible way.

The Minister of Production is Chairman of the Council, which also includes the Secretaries of State for the Dominions, Colonies and India, the President of the Board of Trade and the Minister of Works and Planning. Australia is represented by Mr. S. M. Bruce; New Zealand by Mr. W. J. Jordan, High Commissioner; South Africa by Mr. S. Waterson, High Commissioner; India by Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar; and Southern Rhodesia by Mr. S. M. L. O'Keefe, High Commissioner.

Because of her special position in relation to North American production, Canada will not take direct part in the work of the Council, but will keep in touch with its proceedings. The work on raw materials hitherto done by the Empire Clearing House will be merged in the work of the Council.

(iii) *The Combined Production and Resources Board. Statement issued by the Prime Minister, the Right Hon. W. S. Churchill, on behalf of the United Kingdom and the United States Governments, 9 June 1942;¹ together with an extract from a speech by the Prime Minister of Canada, the Right Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King, in the Canadian House of Commons, 11 June 1942, on the Canadian attitude to the establishment of the Combined Boards*

In order to complete the organization needed for the most effective use of the combined resources of the United States and United Kingdom for the prosecution of the war, there are hereby established a Combined Production and Resources Board and a Combined Food Board.

COMBINED PRODUCTION AND RESOURCES BOARD: This Board shall consist of the chairman of the War Production Board (Mr. Donald Nelson), representing the United States, and the Minister of Production (Mr. Oliver Lyttelton), representing the United Kingdom.

The Board shall—

(A) Combine the production programmes of the United States and the United Kingdom into a single integrated programme, adjusted to the strategic requirements of the war, as indicated to the Board by the Combined Chiefs of Staff, and to all relevant production factors.

In this connexion the Board shall take account of the need for maximum utilization of the productive resources available to the United States, the British Commonwealth of Nations, and the United Nations, the need to reduce demands on shipping to a minimum, and the essential needs of the civilian populations.

(B) In close collaboration with the Combined Chiefs of Staff, assure the continuous adjustment of the combined production programme to meet changing military requirements.

To this end the Combined Chiefs of Staff and the Combined Munitions

¹ *The Times*, 10 June 1942.

Assignments Board shall keep the Combined Production and Resources Board currently informed concerning military requirements, and the Combined Production and Resources Board shall keep the Combined Chiefs of Staff and the Combined Munitions Assignments Board currently informed concerning the facts and possibilities of production.

To facilitate continuous operation the members of the Board shall each appoint a deputy and the Board shall form a combined staff.

The Board shall arrange for such conferences among United States and United Kingdom personnel as it may from time to time deem necessary or appropriate to study particular production needs, and utilize the Joint War Production Staff in London, the Combined Raw Materials Board, the Joint Aircraft Committee, and other existing combined or national agencies for war production in such manner and to such extent as it shall deem necessary.

*The Right Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King:*¹ . . . The Canadian government cordially welcomes the new arrangements for the closer co-ordination of the United Kingdom and United States production programmes, which were announced in Washington on June 9. The United Kingdom-United States combined production and resources board and combined food board should help greatly in the vitally important task of integrating, for war purposes, the productive capacities of both countries.

The Canadian food production programme has been geared to the needs of the war situation for two years now. From the outset of the war we have been proceeding on the policy that the entire food resources of Canada and the United Kingdom were in a common pool, about which the fullest information has been exchanged. We have, for example, been working for more than two years on a programme of increasing our bacon and cheese production to meet the United Kingdom's war requirements, and have been cutting down our domestic consumption of such essential products to make sure that the basic requirements of the United Kingdom were met. More recently, through the medium of the Canada-United States joint economic committees, the two governments have been working out a war-time agricultural programme under which each country can devote its energies to expanding the production of those farm products which it is best equipped to contribute to the common cause.

Similarly, in the field of industrial war production, Canadian capacity has been expanded and developed in the closest possible co-operation, first with the United Kingdom and now with the United States as well. Through the operations of the Canada-United States joint war production committee and of War Supplies Limited, the efficient integration for war purposes of Canadian-American productive capacity has been making satisfactory progress. The new direct arrangements for formalizing a similar United Kingdom-United States relationship should help greatly in organizing the war effort of the united nations as a whole.

¹ Canada, H. of C. Deb., 1942, vol. 3, pp. 3252-3.

3. *Dominion Co-operation with the United States and other Members of the United Nations*

(i) NORTH AMERICAN DEFENCE

(a) *The Ogdensburg Agreement, 18 August 1940,¹ together with an extract from a speech of the Prime Minister, the Right Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King, in the Canadian House of Commons, 12 November 1940*

The Prime Minister and the President have discussed the mutual problems of defense in relation to the safety of Canada and the United States.

It has been agreed that a Permanent Joint Board on Defense shall be set up at once by the two countries.

This Permanent Joint Board on Defense shall commence immediate studies relating to sea, land and air problems including personnel and matériel.

It will consider in the broad sense the defense of the north half of the Western Hemisphere.

The Permanent Joint Board on Defense will consist of four or five members from each country, most of them from the services. It will meet shortly.

*The Right Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King:*² 'The agreement itself was not due to any sudden or precipitate action. It was the outcome of several conversations between the president and myself with respect to coastal defence on both the Atlantic and the Pacific, in which the mutual interests of Canada and the United States were discussed. . . . The Ogdensburg agreement formally confirmed what the previous conversations and planning had initiated. It made known to the world that plans of joint defence were being studied and worked out between the two countries. It did one thing more: It made clear that the board which was being established to make studies and recommendations was not being formed for a single occasion to meet a particular situation, but was intended to deal with a continuing problem. The board on joint defence was, therefore, declared to be permanent. . . .

The Permanent Joint Board on Defence might well be considered a logical development from the declarations made by President Roosevelt and myself in August, 1938. Let me recall these declarations to the minds of hon. members. The vital passage in Mr. Roosevelt's declaration at Kingston on August 18 reads:

The Dominion of Canada is part of the sisterhood of the British Empire. I give to you assurance that the people of the United States will not stand idly by, if domination of Canadian soil is threatened by any other empire.

My acknowledgement of Mr. Roosevelt's Kingston declaration at Woodbridge, Ontario, on August 20, 1938, contained these words:

We, too, have our obligations as a good friendly neighbour, and one of them is

¹ Canada, Treaty Series, 1940, No. 14.

² Canada, H. of C. Deb., 1941, vol. 1, pp. 55-59.

to see that, at our own instance, our country is made as immune from attack or possible invasion as we can reasonably be expected to make it, and that, should the occasion ever arise, enemy forces should not be able to pursue their way, either by land, sea or air to the United States, across Canadian territory.

These declarations marked the first public recognition by both countries of their reciprocity in defence. . . .

In reality the agreement marks the full blossoming of a long association in harmony between the people of Canada and the people of the United States, to which, I hope and believe, the president and I have also in some measure contributed. The link forged by the Canada-United States defence agreement is no temporary axis. It was not formed by nations whose common tie is a mutual desire for the destruction of their neighbours. It is part of the enduring foundation of a new world order, based on friendship and good will. In the furtherance of this new world order, Canada, in liaison between the British Commonwealth and the United States, is fulfilling a manifest destiny. . . .

Throughout my public life, I have consistently maintained the view that the friendliest relations between Canada and the United States, far from weakening the bonds between the nations of the British Commonwealth, would, at all times, prove a source of strength. Moreover, I have always held that in the promotion of Anglo-American friendship, Canada has a very special role to play. . . . Any part which our country may have had in bringing about a harmony of sentiment between the British Empire and the United States may well be a legitimate source of pride to all Canadians.

(b) *The Hyde Park Declaration*

DECLARATION BY THE PRIME MINISTER OF CANADA AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA REGARDING CO-OPERATION FOR WAR PRODUCTION, 20 APRIL 1941¹

Among other important matters, the President and the Prime Minister discussed measures by which the most prompt and effective utilization might be made of the productive facilities of North America for the purposes both of local and hemisphere defence and of the assistance which, in addition to their own programs, both Canada and the United States are rendering to Great Britain and the other democracies.

It was agreed as a general principle that in mobilizing the resources of this continent, each country should provide the other with the defense articles which it is best able to produce, and, above all, produce quickly, and that production programs should be coordinated to this end.

While Canada has expanded its productive capacity manyfold since the beginning of the war, there are still numerous defense articles which it must

¹ Canada, Treaty Series, 1941, No. 14.

obtain in the United States, and purchases of this character by Canada will be even greater in the coming year than in the past. On the other hand, there is existing and potential capacity in Canada for the speedy production of certain kinds of munitions, strategic materials, aluminium and ships, which are urgently required by the United States, for its own purposes.

While exact estimates cannot yet be made, it is hoped that during the next twelve months Canada can supply the United States with between \$200,000,000 and \$300,000,000 worth of such defense articles. This sum is a small fraction of the total defense program of the United States, but it is of great importance to the economic and financial relations between the two countries that payment by the United States for these supplies will materially assist Canada in meeting part of the cost of Canadian defense purchases in the United States.

Insofar as Canada's defense purchases in the United States consist of component parts to be used in equipment and munitions which Canada is producing for Great Britain, it was also agreed that Great Britain will obtain these parts under the Lease-Lend Act and forward them to Canada for inclusion in the finished article.

The technical and financial details will be worked out as soon as possible in accordance with the general principles which have been agreed upon between the President and the Prime Minister.

(ii) THE PACIFIC AREA. THE CREATION OF A PACIFIC WAR COUNCIL

(a) *Extract from an article by the Prime Minister of Australia, the Right Hon. J. Curtin, 28 December 1941*¹

. . . The Australian Government's policy has been grounded on two facts. One is that the war with Japan is not a phase of the struggle with the Axis powers, but is a new war. The second is that Australia must go on to a war footing.

Those two facts involved two lines of action—one in the direction of external policy as to our dealings with Britain, the United States, Russia, the Netherlands East Indies and China in the higher direction of the war in the Pacific.

The second is the reshaping, in fact the revolutionizing, of the Australian way of life until a war footing is attained quickly, efficiently and without question. . . .

We look for a solid and impregnable barrier of the democracies against the three Axis powers, and we refuse to accept the dictum that the Pacific struggle must be treated as a subordinate segment of the general conflict. By that it is not meant that any one of the other theatres of war is of less importance than the Pacific, but that Australia asks for a concerted plan evoking the

¹ *Melbourne Herald*, 28 December 1941.

greatest strength at the Democracies' disposal, determined upon hurling Japan back.

The Australian Government therefore regards the Pacific struggle as primarily one in which the United States and Australia must have the fullest say in the direction of the Democracies' fighting plan.

Without any inhibitions of any kind, I make it quite clear that Australia looks to America, free of any pangs as to our traditional links or kinship with the United Kingdom.

We know the problems that the United Kingdom faces. We know the constant threat of invasion. We know the dangers of dispersal of strength. But we know too that Australia can go, and Britain can still hold on.

We are therefore determined that Australia shall not go, and we shall exert all our energies toward the shaping of a plan, with the United States as its keystone, which will give to our country some confidence of being able to hold out until the tide of battle swings against the enemy.

(b) *Extract from a speech of the Prime Minister, the Right Hon. W. S. Churchill, in the House of Commons, 27 January 1942¹*

... In order to wage the war effectively against Japan, it was agreed that I should propose to those concerned the setting-up of a Pacific Council in London, on the Ministerial plane, comprising Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand and the Dutch Government. Assisted by the British Chiefs of the Staff and the great staffs organizations beneath them. I was to try to form and focus a united view. This would enable the British Commonwealth to act as a whole and form part of plans—plans which are at present far advanced—for collaboration at the appropriate levels in the spheres of defence, foreign affairs and supply. Thus the united view of the British Commonwealth and the Dutch would be transmitted, at first, on the Chiefs of the Staff level, to the combined Chiefs of the Staff Committee sitting in Washington. In the event of differences between the members of the Pacific Council in London, dissentient opinions would also be transmitted. In the event of differences between the London and Washington bodies, it would be necessary for the President and me to reach an agreement. I must point out that it is necessary for everybody to reach an agreement, for nobody can compel anybody else.

The Dutch Government, which is seated in London, might be willing to agree to this arrangement, but the Australian Government desired and the New Zealand Government preferred that this Council of the Pacific should be in Washington, where it would work alongside the Combined Chiefs of the Staff Committee. I have therefore transmitted the views of these two Dominions to the President. . . .

I should like to say, however, that underlying these structural arrangements

¹ H. of C. Deb., vol. 377, coll. 611-14.

are some very practical and simple facts upon which there is full agreement. The Supreme Commander has assumed control of the fighting areas in the South-West Pacific called the 'A.B.D.A.' area—A. B. D. A.—called after the countries which are involved, not the countries which are in the area but the countries which are involved in that area, namely, America, Britain, Dutch and Australasia. . . .

In order to extend the system of unified command which has been set up in the 'A.B.D.A.' area—that is to say, the South-West Pacific—where the actual fighting is going on, in order to extend that system to all areas in which the forces of more than one of the United Nations—because that is the term we have adopted—will be operating, the Eastward approaches to Australia and New Zealand have been styled the Anzac area, and are under United States command, the communications between the Anzac area and America are a United States responsibility, while the communications across the Indian Ocean and from India remain a British responsibility. All this is now working, while the larger constitutional, or semi-constitutional, discussions and structural arrangements are being elaborated by telegrams passing to and fro between so many Governments. . . .

The fact that Australia and New Zealand are in the immediate danger zone reinforces the demand that they should be represented in the War Cabinet of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. We have always been ready to form an Imperial War Cabinet containing the Prime Ministers of the four Dominions. Whenever any of them have come here they have taken their seats at our table as a matter of course. Unhappily, it has not been possible to get them all here together at once. General Smuts may not be able to come over from South Africa, and Mr. Mackenzie King could unfortunately stay only for a short time. But Mr. Fraser was with us, and it was a great pleasure to have him, and we had a three months' visit from Mr. Menzies, which was also a great success, and we were all very sorry when his most valuable knowledge of our affairs and war position, and his exceptional abilities, were lost. For the last three months we have had Sir Earle Page representing the Commonwealth at Cabinets when war matters and Australian matters were under discussion and also, in similar circumstances, upon the Defence Committee. As a matter of fact this has always been interpreted in the most broad and elastic fashion. The Australian Government have now asked specifically 'that an accredited representative of the Commonwealth Government should have the right to be heard in the War Cabinet in the formulation and the direction of policy.' We have of course agreed to this. New Zealand feels bound to ask for similar representation, and the same facilities will of course be available to Canada and South Africa. The presence at the Cabinet table of Dominion representatives who have no power to take decisions and can only report to their Governments evidently raises some serious problems but none, I trust, which cannot be got over with good will. It must not, however, be supposed that in any

circumstances the presence of Dominion representatives for certain purposes could in any way affect the collective responsibility of His Majesty's Servants in Great Britain to Crown and Parliament.

(c) *Extract from a speech of the Minister for External Affairs, the Right Hon. H. V. Evatt, in the Australian House of Representatives, 25 February 1942*¹

. . . One of the earliest actions of the Commonwealth War Cabinet and Advisory War Council after the outbreak of war was to consider the question of a supreme authority for the higher direction and co-ordinated control of Allied activities and strategy in the war in the Pacific. As early as the 11th December, we made representations on the subject to the United Kingdom Government. Our view then was that an inter-Allied body should be established, preferably in the Pacific area itself. No action along these lines was taken. . . . The shape of a permanent organization did not appear until four weeks after the war started. As a result of the Roosevelt-Churchill conversations in Washington, the text of an agreement for a unified command in the south-west Pacific under General Wavell was presented to the Governments concerned at the end of December. To this, the Commonwealth Government gave its immediate assent. But when, on the 4th January, a further communication revealed that the arrangement proposed for the higher direction of the war in the Pacific did not provide for any direct consultation on the part of the Commonwealth, the Government was unable to accept it. This was not a mere last-minute protest for, in assenting to the unified command, the Commonwealth Government had informed Mr. Churchill that it expected Australia to be included in the joint controlling body referred to in the agreement. Thereupon the Commonwealth Government tried hard to secure the establishment in Washington of an inter-Allied body for the higher direction of the war in the Pacific. We preferred Washington as the venue, but we desired above all that the Commonwealth should have the opportunity of conferring as an ally with the United States of America and China at the same council table and on a common footing. On neither point was our proposal acceptable although, as we subsequently ascertained, it was favoured, in part at least, by New Zealand, China and the Netherlands, which are all so directly affected by the Pacific war. Eventually, in view of the urgency of the position, the Government accepted, on the 6th February, a proposal made by Mr. Churchill for a Far Eastern or Pacific Council to sit in London and to be composed of representatives of the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and the Netherlands. We expressed the hope then and we hope still that the question of Allied machinery will be reviewed in the light of our recent military experiences. . . .

The complexity of the method of consultation results in part from the

¹ *Australia, H. of R. Deb.*, vol. 170, pp. 51-53.

geographical separation of the two predominant partners in the war against Japan. Each partner is also separated from the relevant war zone by an enormous distance, and distance tends to blur the outline of the military position. A true inter-Allied body has not yet been provided. Until the other day the Australian Commonwealth had no means of meeting either the United States of America or China at the same level of consultation whether the subject was governmental or strategic, whether the function was supply, munitions or shipping. We have now been informed that China and India have been added by the United Kingdom to the Pacific Council in London. But at no point whatever does any representative of this country meet any representative of the United States of America in any Council, committee, or strategic body directly concerned in the controlling of the Allied war against Japan, or, for that matter, Germany or Italy. I agree that this fact does not conclude the matter, for machinery is not always an obstacle, and we are most grateful to the President for his ever-ready appreciation of the Commonwealth's position.

(d) *Extract from a speech of the Prime Minister, the Right Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King, in the Canadian House of Commons, 25 March 1942¹*

Mr. Green: May I ask the Prime Minister a question? . . . He did not say anything about the Pacific council for which Australia has been pressing so strongly. Is the Prime Minister in a position to state whether Canada will ask that such a Pacific council be set up, and will ask for representation on that council?

The Right Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King: . . . In regard to the Pacific council, it was felt for some time that, having regard to strategic considerations in particular, the area which was immediately concerned was the southern Pacific and the far east, and that the nations which should be called into consultation in reference to matters likely to arise there, should be the nations that were more immediately concerned with that particular area.

May I say this, in a general way, that sometimes an individual achieves most, not by asserting himself too much, but by effacing himself, by taking into account the difficulties which others have and which have to be met, and by seeking as far as possible not to emphasize and increase those difficulties, but rather to minimize and lessen them and, as far as it is possible, overcome them. In that regard it is much the same with a nation as with an individual. One of the difficulties which presents itself respecting the appointment of a board or council which relates to any part of the British commonwealth is that the commonwealth is composed of several self-governing nations and, where one part seeks representation on a particular board or council, unless it is possible to give the best of reasons why every other part of the commonwealth should not be similarly represented, a difficulty immediately presents itself.

¹ Canada, H. of C. Deb., 1942, vol. 2, pp. 1632-4.

I give that as an illustration of the kind of thing which has presented itself to the Prime Minister of Britain and his colleagues in deciding upon representation of certain nations of the commonwealth in Britain and the kind of thing of which we here have had to take account in considering whether we should be represented on a board or council in Washington rather than in London. . . .

Up to the present, and may I say, right along, we have taken the position as a government that, where we saw that Canada's interests were likely to be prejudiced in any particular, we have made strong protest and strong representations as to why we should be given representation which up to that time we had not had. But where we have had reason to believe that our position was such that it in no way was being prejudiced or impaired, we have sought, as I have said, not to raise or press matters which were likely to make a difficult situation more difficult, but rather to watch the situation and at the right moment gain the representation we wished.

That is, I think, pretty much the situation with regard to the matter of Canada's representation on a council at Washington at the present time, that the final arrangements in respect to that council have not yet been made as between Britain and the United States; but both know that Canada expects to have full representation, and we have no reason to believe that we shall not have the needed representation at the moment that it may be best to bring it into being. . . .

I hope it will not be assumed, because we are not actually represented on any council, that we are not kept very fully informed with respect to all that is taking place and that Canada's interests in every particular are not being closely watched. We have our liaison officers at Washington; we have there the representatives of the different departments; we have our minister. We have similar representation in London. We are, I can say, kept informed day by day as to any matters of vital concern. The matter of the formal representation, in the long run, is something which relates only to the question of the right moment. . . . Our position has been strongly presented to the United Kingdom and the United States governments. They both are informed of our attitude and of our desires. Governments do not all move as rapidly as some people would like, and it is just a matter of the right moment of adjustment.

Mr. Hanson (York-Sunbury): Have we asked to be represented on the Pacific council, or how far has Canada gone? I will make that inquiry.

Mr. Mackenzie King: I will say we have, yes. . . .

When I say we have, I do not say we have pressed for it at this very moment, because we realize that there have been situations in England which require our point of view to be given there rather than in the United States. But we have made it sure that we expect to be represented on the council in the United States if it is finally decided that the council is to continue there.

(e) *Reciprocal Lend-Lease Agreement concluded between the Governments of the United States and the Commonwealth of Australia, 3 September 1942*¹

I. NOTE FROM AUSTRALIAN MINISTER, WASHINGTON, TO THE UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF STATE

As contracting parties to the United Nations declaration of 1st January, 1942, the Governments of the United States of America and the Commonwealth of Australia pledged themselves to employ their full resources, military and economic, against those nations with which they are at war.

With regard to arrangements for Mutual Aid between our two Governments, I refer to the Agreement signed at Washington on 23rd February, 1942,² between the Governments of the United States of America and the United Kingdom on the principles applying to Mutual Aid in the present war authorized and provided for by Act of Congress of 11th March, 1941, and have the honour to inform you that the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia accepts the principles therein contained as governing the provision of Mutual Aid between itself and the Government of the United States of America.

It is the understanding of the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia that the general principle to be followed in providing such aid is that the war production and war resources of both nations should be used by the armed forces of each, in the ways which most effectively utilize available materials, man-power, production facilities and shipping space.

I now set forth the understanding of the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia of the principles and procedure applicable to the provision of aid by the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia to the armed forces of the United States and the manner in which such aid will be correlated with the maintenance of those forces by the United States Government.

1. While each Government retains the right of final decision, in the light of its own potentialities and responsibilities, decisions as to the most effective use of resources shall, so far as possible, be made in common, pursuant to the common plan for winning the war.
2. As to financing the provision of such aid, within the fields mentioned below, it is my understanding that the general principles to be applied, to the point at which the common war effort is most effective, is that as large a portion as possible of the articles and services which each Government may authorize to be provided to the other shall be in the form of reciprocal aid so that the need of each Government for the currency of the other may be reduced to a minimum.

¹ Australia, Department of External Affairs, *Current Notes on International Affairs*, vol. 13, no. 3. A similar agreement was signed on the same day with the Government of New Zealand.

² Cmd. 6341.

It is accordingly my understanding that the United States Government will provide, in accordance with the provisions of, and to the extent authorized under, the Act of March 11th, 1941, the share of its war production made available to Australia. The Government of Australia will provide on the same terms and as reciprocal aid so much of its war production made available to the United States as it authorizes in accordance with the principles enunciated in this Note.

3. The Government of Australia will provide as reciprocal aid the following types of assistance to the armed forces of the United States in Australia or its territories and in such other cases as may be determined by common agreement in the light of the development of the war:—
 - (a) Military equipment, ammunition and military and naval stores;
 - (b) other supplies, material, facilities and services for United States forces except for pay and allowances of such forces, administrative expenses, and such local purchases as its official establishments may make other than through official establishments of the Australian Government as specified in paragraph 4.
 - (c) Supplies, materials and services needed in the construction of military projects, tasks and similar capital works required for the common war effort in Australia and in such other places as may be determined, except for wages and salaries of United States citizens.
4. The practical application of the principles formulated in this Note, including the procedure by which the requests for aid by either Government are made and acted upon, shall be worked out as the occasion may require by agreement between the two Governments, acting when possible through their appropriate military or civilian administrative authorities. Requests by the United States Government for such aid will be presented by duly authorized authorities of the United States to official agencies of the Commonwealth of Australia which will be designated or established in Canberra and in areas where United States forces are located for the purpose of facilitating the provision of Reciprocal Aid.
5. It is my understanding that all such aid accepted by the President of the United States or his authorized representatives from the Government of Australia will be received as a benefit to the United States under the Act of March 11th, 1941. In so far as circumstances will permit, appropriate record of aid received under this arrangement, except for miscellaneous facilities and services, will be kept by each Government.

If the Government of the United States concurs in the foregoing, I would suggest that the present Note and your reply to that effect be regarded as placing on record the understanding of our two Governments in this matter.

II. NOTE FROM THE UNITED STATES SECRETARY OF STATE TO THE AUSTRALIAN MINISTER, WASHINGTON

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your Note of today's date concerning the principles and procedure applicable to the provision of aid by the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia to the armed forces of the United States of America.

In reply I have the honour to inform you that the Government of the United States of America likewise accept the principles contained in the agreement of February 23rd, 1942, between it and the Government of the United Kingdom, as governing the provision of mutual aid between the Governments of the United States and of the Commonwealth of Australia. My Government agrees with the understanding of the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia as expressed in your Note of today's date, and, in accordance with the suggestion contained therein, your Note and this reply will be regarded as placing on record the understanding between our two Governments in this matter.

This further integration and strengthening of our common war effort gives me great satisfaction.

Accept, Sir, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

(f) *Extract from a speech of the Minister for External Affairs, the Right Hon. H. V. Evatt, in the Australian House of Representatives, 3 September 1942¹*

... I take leave to refer to some of the work performed by the mission to Britain and the United States, from which I recently returned. . . .

The first task of our mission was to obtain approval to the creation of a Pacific War Council at Washington so that Australia could meet Britain, the United States and the other Pacific nations at the same cabinet table with a view to co-ordinating our war effort against Japan. Thanks both to the President and to Mr. Churchill the task of creating the War Council was accomplished.

The machinery was set up, and I had the honour of being the first representative of Australia on the Council.

But machinery is useless unless it functions efficiently. It has worked efficiently because President Roosevelt was determined that it should so work. The body meets at least once a week. The President always takes the chair, and the accredited representatives of Britain, China, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the Netherlands, and now the Philippines are always present. While the Council is not executive in character, important matters on the political side, and to some extent on the military side, are finalized at the Council. This is often possible because the President is also the Commander-in-Chief of all United States forces.

¹ Australia, H. of R. Deb., vol. 172, pp. 79-80.

The working of such a Council necessarily brings into sharp focus the claims and needs of all the Pacific theatres of war; it ensures that the Pacific shall not be overlooked in the measurement from time to time by the strategic authorities of the claims made by each theatre commander to a fair proportion of the munitions and equipment in the common pool of the United Nations.

4. *The Supreme Direction of the War: the Role of a Dominion*

Extracts from a speech of the Prime Minister, the Right Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King, in the Canadian House of Commons, 1 February 1943¹

... My hon. friend has asked me to speak about the conference at Casablanca. May I say that in all particulars it was similar to conferences which have taken place between Mr. Churchill and the President on three previous occasions when these two great leaders, one of Great Britain and the other of the United States, met in conference together. As hon. members will recall the first meeting was off the coast of Newfoundland; the second was in Washington in December of 1941 and January of 1942, while the third was in Washington in June of 1942. The recent meeting, as hon. members are aware, took place at Casablanca in North Africa.

As I have said, the meeting at Casablanca was a meeting between these two leaders and their military experts, the civil and military leaders of Great Britain and the civil and military leaders of the United States. I was not invited to be present at the conference—and that, I think, for the best of reasons. My position, or rather that of Canada, is similar in all particulars, or at least in many particulars, to that of Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and some other parts of the commonwealth, but in many particulars it is similar to that of other of the united nations. The countries at war today are large in number. There are now some thirty countries forming what are known as the united nations. If one of the united nations is to be invited to a conference between two great leaders, there is every reason why other nations should feel that they were entitled to a like invitation.

From the beginning of the war I have had to face this question, and be prepared to make answer to it: As the leader of the government in Canada, am I in a time of war going to make more difficult than it is the situation which exists, or am I going to do all I possibly can to be as reasonable as it is possible for a man to be, and thereby make the situation easier than it would otherwise be?

I could this afternoon protest to the house that Canada had not been invited to the conference. Were I to do so, how much would I be helping the war effort of this country or the combined effort of the united nations? In the first place, as I have said, I do not see how it would have been possible to

¹ Canada, H. of C. Deb., 1943, vol. 1, pp. 40-43.

have singled out one country for invitation, and not to have invited others. But more than that, I believe we have to do one of two things, when it comes to the matter of supreme strategy: either we must have confidence in those who are at the head of the united nations' war effort of today, do all we can to let the world see that we have that confidence, and assist them in every way we can, or we must take a different attitude, one which to my mind could only result in disaster.

But when I say that countries other than Great Britain and the United States were not represented at the Casablanca conference, it does not mean that the governments of those countries were not fully aware of the discussions that were going to take place there, and that they have not been informed with respect to discussions that have taken place. In connexion with all matters pertaining to the war there is a certain procedure that has been built up—improvised, if you like. It has had to be improvised, because the war is something new, and the situation changes from day to day. And in that improvisation of the war effort of so many nations, tacitly if you like—and I think more than tacitly; I could say openly—there has been a recognition of the fact that the Prime Minister of Great Britain and the President of the United States were the two men around whom all could rally in support of any policies concerning which they might give the final word. In the shaping of that policy every part of the British empire and all of the united nations, in so far as it is possible for them to be consulted and informed in the matter, have a part.

Our chiefs of staff in this city are in constant touch with the combined chiefs of staff having their headquarters at Washington. The war committee of the cabinet is informed of the discussions taking place there from day to day. We have a permanent liaison officer, an official of the government, who is there at the present time, and is there also throughout the year. We are entitled to follow discussions and to be heard respecting any aspect of the war situation we may wish to present. Canada's interests in these matters are placed fully before the boards that are continuously sitting and dealing with these matters.

A decision reached at Casablanca is not a decision come to suddenly by the President and the Prime Minister. Such decision is the outcome of discussions which have extended over many months, and which are finally crystallized in a formal way by the heads of these two great countries. So far as Canada is concerned, there is no man in any part of the world who has had more intimate and close association with the British staff than has General McNaughton, the head of the Canadian forces. On military matters, General McNaughton, I venture to say, knows the mind of the staff in Great Britain as well as any member of the staff knows his own mind. And they know General McNaughton's mind. And when British staff officers go to Casablanca they do not go to support a policy which they believe is superior to the views of

General McNaughton; they go to support a policy which they know has been fully considered before the matter ever came up in conference there. . . .

The talks in Casablanca were discussions between the heads of the United Kingdom and United States governments and their principal military advisers, in direct continuation of arrangements made during Mr. Churchill's first visit to Washington for the establishment of combined United Kingdom-United States machinery for co-operation in various phases of the war effort. These combined arrangements were designed to effect closer co-ordination between these two countries, with each of which Canada maintains especially close and intimate relations. There has not yet been developed out of the combined United Kingdom-United States organizations the more comprehensive institutional organization which a total war effort of all the united nations probably requires. The difficulties in the way which will have to be overcome should be obvious to everybody. Nobody would wish to sacrifice the speed and efficiency which effective strategy demands to the formal exigencies of international representative institutions.

To wage war effectively, all our governments have had to assume unprecedented powers and responsibilities and have had to delegate unprecedented powers and responsibilities. There is constantly room for improvement in the plans by which we are mobilizing our own war effort and integrating it with the war effort of our allies. There has been a good deal of pretty successful improvisation to meet the means of war conditions. New types of joint arrangements, new agencies for mutual aid, new channels for communication and consultation, are being worked out. The framework of over-all co-operation is found in our association with our allies as members of the united nations. This framework is being progressively filled in and strengthened, but the job of constructing a workable international organization for the winning of the war and the maintenance of the peace is far from completed. There are obvious gaps and anomalies in the present arrangements to worry people who seek symmetry above all. I hope to see some of these gaps closed and anomalies removed.

We must somehow succeed in developing methods and instruments of co-operation which will strengthen the spirit of partnership in which all free peoples, large and small, are associated in our common struggle. In doing so we must not prejudice or compromise—in the slightest degree—the concentration of responsibility for strategic decisions upon which the successful prosecution of the war depends.

I think that statement will appeal to the common sense of members of this house. It will be apparent that however much we may desire to have organizations that may seem all-embracing, the form of organization which is likely to be most effective is something which has to come into being as events help to determine the situation. When Mr. Churchill and the President met at Washington in December, 1941, and January, 1942, no one in any part of the

British Commonwealth or in any of the united nations took exception to those two great leaders conferring together along with their military experts on the score that all other parts of the commonwealth or all the other united nations were not represented. The same was true when Mr. Churchill and the President met again in Washington in June of last year.

On one of those occasions, as hon. members will recall, Mr. Churchill visited Ottawa and was present at a meeting of the war committee of the cabinet at which he gave a statement to my colleagues and myself of the discussions which he and the President had had. I think I may recall also to the minds of hon. members that when the President and the Prime Minister of Great Britain first met at Washington I was invited by both to be present, and I was present at conferences that took place between them. I was not present at all the conferences, but I was kept very fully informed. Also at the time that the President and Mr. Churchill met in June, I was invited again to be present in Washington while they were there. I had many conversations with both of them individually and together in reference to the different matters they had been discussing.

I think I am at liberty to say now that, at the Washington conference in June, plans with respect to the invasion of North Africa were fully discussed. I had inside knowledge of those plans at that time. They were not carried out for some little time thereafter, but they were known to the military advisers of the governments of the united nations concerned, and later were made known to members of the war committee of our government in so far as it was desirable that they should be known.

In many of these matters of strategy there are obvious reasons why the information should be confined to military experts more particularly rather than made known generally to the civil authorities. I could mention other instances. Perhaps I am not disclosing a secret when I say that the President of the United States invited me just a month or two ago to visit him in Washington. I spent two days and a half with him as his guest at the White House. We were practically alone in our discussions in the White House at the time, and on that occasion I received from the President the fullest measure of his confidence with regard to matters pertaining to the war. I have enjoyed a similar confidence in communications from Mr. Churchill. I am at the present time at liberty to say that when Mr. Churchill was in Russia having his conversations with Mr. Stalin he communicated with me fully with respect to those conferences. If there were any reason in the world to believe that the Canadian government was not receiving the fullest confidence of Mr. Churchill and his colleagues in the British government, or, as we have an equal right to receive it, in a certain measure, from the President of the United States and those who surround him, I would be the first one to take exception to a procedure which did not keep us fully informed. But I am sure hon. members of the house will agree with me that matters of the kind—the

subjects which are discussed, or matters incidental thereto—cannot be made known generally. But what I would like hon. members to appreciate is that some of these things place a very heavy burden upon whoever has to carry the responsibility of maintaining secrecy concerning them. I think I may ask from hon. gentlemen opposite that in so far as is possible for them to do so they will realize that I have a very great responsibility in the matter of confidences, confidences which have to be maintained if the war effort is to be carried on successfully, and I trust that they will not embarrass me by asking questions which it is impossible to answer without disclosing information that should not be disclosed.

5. *Thoughts About the Role of the Commonwealth in the Post-War World and Proposals for the Strengthening of Machinery for Co-operation, 1943-4*

(i) *Extracts from statements by the Prime Minister of Australia, the Right Hon. J. Curtin, 14 August and 6 September 1943,¹ and from his speech to the Federal Conference of the Australian Labour Party, 14 December 1943²*

(a) (14 August 1943): Australia today has a place of dignity and respect in the councils of the nations. The world, however, is changing economically and, as a result of the war, Australia is part of a group known as the United Nations. That means a degree of collaboration greater than anything in history. Future problems will mean greater associations with Britain, the other Dominions and their Allies. I hold the view that whatever economic or political changes take place, all that is good will inevitably survive. There must be an enlargement of our law-making powers so that we shall have regard to the interests of those who have stood with us for the preservation of the vital things of life and with us may co-operate in making the world a finer place.

I believe some form of Imperial consultation must emerge as a result of the experiences of the world. I do not believe that Britain can manage the Empire on the basis purely of a government sitting in London. I believe some Imperial authority must be evolved so that the British Commonwealth of Nations will have, if not an executive body, at least a standing consultative body. With all the scientific facilities for communication, these meetings must be frequent in the years to come, so that all the Dominions and Britain may have conference, not at long intervals, but quick and immediate consultations respecting any urgent matter when it arises.

An Empire council may lead to some larger world body about which men have dreamed. It will be impossible to deal with the legacy of the war in the higher councils of the nations unless machinery similar to that set up for war is maintained.

¹ Texts supplied by the Commonwealth National Library, Canberra.

² *Australia Looks to the Future* (Australia News and Information Pamphlet, 1943).

(b) (6 September 1943): Gratifying and encouraging interest has been shown, particularly in Britain, in the proposal I put forward on 14th August, 1943, for a new approach to Empire government after the war.

Machinery to give effect to what I am sure will be recognized as an inevitable post-war development, would appear to be easy to devise. There is ample evidence of the ability of Britain and the Dominions to collaborate on matters of policy in war. Surely, when the pressing problems of peace are to be met, the same collaboration can be achieved?

I visualize a council with a structure similar to the present Pacific War Council, on which representatives of the Dominions could consult regularly with representatives of the British Government. Dominion representatives could be the respective High Commissioners, and they could be replaced at appropriate intervals by a special representative who would be a Minister.

The Empire council could be a permanent body and its meetings held regularly. Because of everything that is inherent in Dominion status, I consider that meetings should, on occasions, be held in Ottawa, Canberra, Pretoria and Wellington as well as London. Agreement upon a movable venue for the Empire council would do much towards obtaining the greatest benefits to constituent members of the British Commonwealth.

The Empire council should have a permanent secretariat of men as expert in the problems of peace as those who are expert in war advising the councils of the Empire and the United Nations today.

The place Australia will occupy in the Pacific after the war can never be the same as it was up to 1939 and she must have available the advantage of concerted Empire policy if she is to be a Power to stand for democracy in the South Pacific. Similarly, the power of Britain as a force for peace in the future will be strengthened in the world if the firm voice against potential aggressors comes from the Empire, and not merely London.

The economic war in the post-war years will be fierce and marked by many complex angles. Australia cannot allow her economic position to be not known or misunderstood with a Pacific studded by bases occupied by half a dozen nations shut out behind tariff walls. Australia's voice in these matters must be heard equally as it is heard now in matters of war.

All these phases of Empire government after the war call for the constant association of the best minds of Britain and the Dominions. Anything less is fraught with dangers, both in terms of defensive security and economy, too apparent to be ignored.

(c) (14 December 1943): . . . In what directions can measures be suggested for improving the machinery for Empire co-operation? The aim of all machinery must be to provide for full and continuous consultation. This consultation must be consistent with the sovereign control of its policy by each Government. No machinery which may be established can be superior to or more satisfactory than the periodical conferences of Prime Ministers of the

various parts of the Empire, provided they are held frequently. The Prime Minister is the head of the respective governments and no one else can speak with the same authority. There can be no substitute for conferences of Prime Ministers on questions of major Empire policy. Difficulties, of course, will arise in arranging such meetings owing to local circumstances in each part of the Empire, but in normal times conferences should be possible at fairly frequent intervals. The place of meeting should not necessarily always be in London. Opportunity should be taken to meet in the other parts of the Empire. Such a procedure would emphasize to the various parts of the Empire the reality of the interrelation of the governments and people of the Empire in the same way that the King's representatives in each Dominion and colony typify their loyalty to a common sovereign. . . .

The High Commissioners in London and the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs should normally be a standing subcommittee of the Imperial Conference to handle matters in the intervals when they cannot be dealt with by Prime Ministers or Ministers. It should be presided over by the British Prime Minister or his deputy. It would co-opt where necessary British Ministers or Dominion Ministers visiting London.

Corresponding to meetings of Prime Ministers, there should be meetings of other Ministers as occasion may require to deal with important questions of mutual interest, such as trade and communications. Again, such conferences need not necessarily be held always in the one place. On occasions the questions may only affect certain parts of the Empire.

In addition to periodical meetings of Prime Ministers and Ministers there is also the permanent accredited representation of the governments to each other in the form of High Commissioners. These constitute a continuous personal link to supplement the direct correspondence between governments. The High Commissioners are also able to represent their governments on bodies created for the consideration of special aspects of Empire interests and relations. An illustration is the Committee of Imperial Defence, which is usually presided over by the British Prime Minister. . . .

Of primary importance on the staff level is the Secretariat of the Imperial Conference. This would normally be located in London, but it would be an ambulatory body and function for conferences at the place of meeting. All Dominions would be represented on the Secretariat. It would be responsible for seeing to the preparation and presentation of information on subjects to be considered by the Conference from time to time. It would have regard to the completion of action or resubmissions to the Conference. It would provide the Conference with an agency for continuity in its detailed work which is important in view of changes which occur in governments and Prime Ministers. The Secretariat would not supersede the present established direct channels of communication between governments though its members would be directly responsible to their respective Prime Ministers.

Outside the scope of governmental machinery, great benefits are to be obtained by regular visits between representatives of parliamentary associations, the press, trades union, cultural, professional and commercial organizations.

The responsibilities of citizenship today transcend national limits and carry wider obligations as subjects of the British Commonwealth and inhabitants of a world community at large. The full expression of these responsibilities is to be a good Australian, a good British subject and a good world citizen. They are complementary to each other.

(ii) *Extract from a speech of the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, the Right Hon. the Viscount Cranborne, in the House of Lords, 2 November 1943¹*

. . . This debate takes place on two Motions standing in the names of the noble Viscount, Lord Elibank, and the noble Lord, Lord Craigmyle. These two Motions both relate to the same subject—to some extremely interesting and important suggestions which have recently been put forward by Mr. Curtin, the Prime Minister of Australia, on the subject of post-war Imperial collaboration—and I therefore propose, with the concurrence of the noble Lords, to answer both their speeches together.

Any Dominions Secretary would naturally welcome both today's debate and the remarks of the Prime Minister of Australia which have given rise to it. After all, we cannot have too much ventilation of this subject. As I have said before in a previous debate on Imperial relations, the British Commonwealth and Empire, as it has now come to be called, is not static but dynamic in character. It follows from that that the machinery of collaboration between the various parts of the Commonwealth, if the continuance of the Empire is to be assured, must be, not rigid and unalterable, but capable of constant change to meet changing circumstances. I was a little surprised by a suggestion which I detected in the speeches of the noble Viscount, Lord Elibank and the most reverend Lord Lang of Lambeth, that the policy of the Empire today is still directed from London without adequate consultation with the Dominions.

. . . It is not the case. There is, in fact, constant consultation between the United Kingdom and the Dominions. In fact, in the view of Mr. Mackenzie King, if I may quote a phrase which he used, the present structure of international collaboration is 'a Cabinet of Cabinets' and he has said publicly that he prefers it to any other system. . . .

Of course, I do not want anyone to be under any misapprehension. In war-time, inevitably, there are occasions when immediate decisions have to be taken by His Majesty's Government here, and there is not adequate time for consultation with the Dominions. It is unavoidable that that should occur every now and then in war-time. But these occasions are extremely rare, and it is the object of the Dominions Secretary and the Dominions Office that they occur as rarely as is practically possible. I should like to give your

¹ H. of L. Deb., vol. 129, coll. 510-18.

Lordships some account of the machinery of consultation which at present exists because, as I say, I have been a little shocked by the impression I have detected today, even in your Lordships' House, that this machinery is not effective. . . .

The machinery has greatly developed in recent years, and even since the beginning of the war, and it is now a very elaborate network. There are no less than six channels of communication between the different Governments of the Empire. There is first the normal communication between Government and Government through the Dominions Offices here and the Departments of External Affairs in the Dominions overseas. Through that channel shoals of telegrams go out every single day on all passing events, mostly now of course concerned with the war and international situation. Secondly, there are communications to the Dominion Governments and the Dominion Prime Ministers personally through the United Kingdom High Commissioners in the Dominions, and in the reverse direction communications to His Majesty's Government here through the Dominion High Commissioners in London. These two last channels are mainly used when matters can more conveniently be discussed orally and when the more official and rigid method of cable and telegraph is not so suitable.

Thirdly, there is the system, which was introduced by my right honourable friend the Foreign Secretary when he was at the Dominions Office, of daily meetings between the Dominions Secretary and the Dominion High Commissioners. Personally I attach, as your Lordships know, the very highest importance to these meetings. I believe they are in many ways the crown of the structure that has been built up. They ensure that there shall be close, cordial and continuous relations between the Dominions Secretary and the Dominions' representatives. These meetings take place every afternoon. If we had not been having this debate today I should have been at such a meeting at the present moment. I am present at these meetings as Secretary of State, with the Under-Secretary and the Permanent Under-Secretary and the four High Commissioners. The meetings are quite informal. There is no fixed agenda. I give to those present all the latest information in my possession as to events in the international sphere and, especially, at the present time, with regard to the conduct of the war. I also let them know what has passed at the Cabinet on matters of interest to the Dominions and particularly in the field of foreign affairs, with the object of ensuring that the Dominions, who control their own foreign policy, should be kept aware of all developments in ours so as to ensure, so far as we can, perfect co-ordination.

I emphasize that because I think the noble Viscount, Lord Elibank, said, with great truth, and I think it valuable that he should have said it, that there is no sphere where it is more important that there should be complete unanimity between the nations of the British Commonwealth than in the sphere of foreign affairs. It is for that reason there is also present at these meetings. . . .

a high official of the Foreign Office. This addition I introduced when I was last at the Dominions Office. His presence ensures that the Foreign Secretary should be immediately acquainted with the views of the High Commissioners on matters which they wish to bring to the notice of the Foreign Office. The High Commissioners on their part, raise any points which they consider require special consideration from the Dominions angle. I believe I should have the agreement of all the High Commissioners, indeed I am sure I should, in saying that this is an extremely effective piece of Imperial machinery. In addition, Mr. Bruce also attends meetings of the War Cabinet on the basis agreed with the Australian Government in 1942, as their accredited representative. The other Dominion High Commissioners do not do that because, when the same facilities were offered to the other Dominion Governments, they expressed themselves as satisfied with the existing arrangements.

Finally, in addition to what I may call standing machinery of collaboration, there are of course *ad hoc* visits by Dominion Ministers to this country and of United Kingdom Ministers to the Dominions. The most important of these are no doubt the visits of Dominion Prime Ministers. We have had the advantage of visits of Prime Ministers from all the Dominions since the beginning of the war. We have had the visit of Mr. Menzies from Australia, of Mr. Fraser from New Zealand, and of Mr. Mackenzie King from Canada. We have had two visits by Field Marshal Smuts from South Africa and we are very happy to have him with us today. I am quite certain all my colleagues would agree with me in saying that the visit of this great soldier-statesman has already been of inestimable value in the counsels of the Cabinet. In addition, our own Prime Minister, as your Lordships know, has also found it possible to pay two visits to Canada. Further, there is a constant flow of other Dominion Ministers to the United Kingdom.

It would be extremely difficult to over-estimate the value of these Ministerial visits. They make it possible to straighten out, very often in a few hours, sometimes almost in a few minutes, problems which might have occupied weeks of correspondence by means of cable or letter. It is of course far easier for Canada than for any other Dominion to carry out that part of inter-Imperial collaboration under modern conditions of air travel. . . . In these days, a Minister can go from this country to Canada in a very few hours, and full advantage has been taken of these new improvements in travel. But whenever these Dominion Ministers come and wherever they come from, they are very welcome in this country.

What I have said up to now relates to channels of communication on the higher levels of policy. On the lower and technical level also there are many channels of collaboration. Thus many of the Ministers of great Departments of State, for instance the Ministry of Food, the Ministry of Supply, the Air Ministry and the Ministry of War Transport, have their own war-time missions or representatives in the various Dominions. Equally the Dominions

have their own liaison officers here in many fields—military, naval, air, supply, and so on. There are also numerous interchanges by means of *ad hoc* visits of officials and experts, similar to the visits of Ministers to which I have already referred. All this complex inter-communication provides a closely inter-woven machinery for keeping the various parts of the Empire in close touch with each other.

Such, my Lords, is the existing machinery of Imperial collaboration. I have described it at some considerable length as I feel that even now it is not realized how complete that system is. I believe it has proved satisfactory to the Dominions and has met most of the needs of war-time conditions. No doubt much of this machinery will continue after the war. But I do not wish noble Lords to think that I am complacent about the situation, or to give the impression that His Majesty's Government regard the present machinery as perfect or necessarily the best that could be devised to meet peace-time conditions. We are always ready to consider amendments and improvements for more regular meetings between the representatives of the Governments of the Commonwealth, such as have been suggested, I think, by the noble Viscount, Lord Elibank, and any other suggestions of the same kind. . . .

But I would emphasize this: it is not for us alone, for the United Kingdom, to decide what new machinery should be devised. We are only one of five. There is the United Kingdom, which is the Metropolitan Dominion of His Majesty the King, and there are Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, which are the overseas Dominions of His Majesty the King. All five, as the noble Viscount, Lord Bennett, has pointed out, have absolute equality under the Statute of Westminster, and all have an equal right to decide what machinery should be set up. But I can say this: whatever improvements to the structure of Imperial collaboration are found generally acceptable, His Majesty's Government here will certainly consider them most sympathetically. For we recognize fully, that it is only if the British Commonwealth is of one mind about the many problems which will face the world after this war, and only if we can work closely and confidently together, that we shall be able to play that great part to which our long traditions and our wide interests entitle us.

(iii) *Extract from a speech of the Prime Minister of South Africa, Field-Marshal the Right Hon. J. G. Smuts, to the Empire Parliamentary Association, 25 November 1943*¹

. . . I now come to much more explosive things, for which I hope you will not hold me responsible hereafter. I am suggesting some new lines of thought. We have moved into a strange world, a world such as has not been seen for hundreds of years, perhaps not for a thousand years. Europe is completely changing. The old Europe which we have known, into which we were born, and in which we have taken our vital interest as our Mother-Continent, has

¹ Published as *Thoughts on the New World* by the Empire Parliamentary Association, 1943.

gone. The map is being rolled up and a new map is unrolling before us. We shall have to do a great deal of fundamental thinking, and scrapping of old points of view, before we find our way through that new Continent which now opens up before us.

Just look for a moment at what is happening, and what will be the state of affairs at the end of this war. In Europe three of the Great Powers will have disappeared. That will be quite a unique development. We have never seen such a situation in the modern history of this Continent. Three of the five Great Powers in Europe will have disappeared. France has gone, and if ever she returns it will be a hard and a long upward pull for her to emerge again. A nation that has once been overtaken by a catastrophe such as she has suffered, reaching to the foundations of her nationhood, will not easily resume her old place again. We may talk about her as a Great Power, but talking will not help her much. We are dealing with one of the greatest and most far-reaching catastrophes in history, the like of which I have not read of. The upward climb will be a bitter and a long one. France has gone, and will be gone in our day, and perhaps for many a day. Italy has completely disappeared, perhaps never to emerge again in the old form. The old Bismarckian Germany may perhaps never rise again. Nobody knows. The Germans are a great people, with great qualities, and Germany is inherently a great country, but after the smash that will follow this war Germany will be written off the slate in Europe for long, long years and after that a new world may have arisen.

We are therefore left with Great Britain and with Russia. Russia is the new Colossus in Europe—the new Colossus that bestrides this Continent. When we consider all that has happened to Russia within the last 25 years, and we see Russia's inexplicable and phenomenal rise, we can only call it one of the great phenomena in history. It is the sort of thing to which there is no parallel in history, but it has come about. These are questions of power which I say we should not neglect. Russia is the new Colossus on the European continent. What the after effects of that will be nobody can say. We can but recognize that this is a new fact to reckon with, and we must reckon with it coldly and objectively. With the others down and out, and herself the mistress of the Continent, her power will not only be great on that account, but it will be still greater because the Japanese Empire will also have gone the way of all flesh, and therefore any check or balance that might have arisen in the East will have disappeared. You will have Russia in a position which no country has ever occupied in the history of Europe.

Then you will have this country of Great Britain, with a glory and an honour and a prestige such as perhaps no nation has ever enjoyed in history; recognized as possessing a greatness of soul that has entered into the very substance of world history. But from a material economic point of view she will be a poor country. She has put in her all. This country has held nothing

back. There is nothing left in the till. She has put her body and soul and everything into it to win the battle of mankind. She will have won it, but she will come out of it poor in substance.

The British Empire and the British Commonwealth remain as one of the greatest things of the world and of history, and nothing can touch that fact. But you must remember that the Empire and the Commonwealth are mostly extra-European. Those are the overflows of this great British system to other continents. The purely European position of Great Britain will be one of enormous prestige and respect, and will carry enormous weight, but she will be poor.

Then outside Europe you have the United States, the other great World Power. You will therefore have these three Great Powers: Russia the Colossus of Europe, Great Britain with her feet in all continents, but crippled materially here in Europe; and the United States of America with enormous assets, with wealth and resources and potentialities of power beyond measure. The question is how you are going to deal with that world situation. I am just painting before you the picture of the new world that we shall have to face, which will be something quite unlike what we have had to deal with for a century, or indeed for centuries.

Many people look to a union or closer union between the United States of America and Great Britain, with her Commonwealth and Empire, as the new path to be followed in the future, in this world which I am describing as facing us. I myself am doubtful about that. I attach the greatest importance to Anglo-American collaboration for the future. To my mind it is, beyond all doubt, one of the great hopes of mankind. But I do not think that, as what I might call a political axis, it will do. It would be a one-sided affair. If you were to pit the British Commonwealth plus the United States against the rest of the world, it would be a very lop-sided world. You would stir up opposition and rouse other lions in the path. You would stir up international strife and enmity which might lead to still more colossal struggles for world power than we have seen in our day. I do not see human welfare, peace, security along those lines.

So we come back to where we started, namely the trinity. We shall not act wisely in looking to an Anglo-American union or axis as the solution for the future. We shall have to stick to the trinity that I have referred to. I think we must make up our minds to that as the solution for the present and the near foreseeable future.

But then I am troubled with this thought—and this is the explosive stuff I am coming to. In that trinity you will have two partners of immense power and resources—Russia and America. And you will have this island, the heart of the Empire and of the Commonwealth, weak in her European resources in comparison with the vast resources of the other two. An unequal partnership, I am afraid. The idea has repeatedly floated before my mind, and I am just

mentioning it here as something to consider and to ponder—whether Great Britain should not strengthen her European position, apart from her position as the centre of this great Empire and Commonwealth outside Europe, by working closely together with those smaller Democracies in Western Europe which are of our way of thinking, which are entirely with us in their outlook and their way of life, and in all their ideals, and which in many ways are of the same political and spiritual substance as ourselves. Should there not be closer union between us?

Should we not cease as Great Britain to be an island? Should we not work intimately together with these small Democracies in Western Europe which by themselves may be lost, as they are lost today, and as they may be lost again? They have learned their lesson, they have been taught by the experience of this war when centuries of argument would not have convinced them. Neutrality is obsolete, is dead. They have learned the lesson that, standing by themselves on the Continent, dominated by one or other Great Power, as will be the future position, they are lost. Surely they must feel that their place is with this member of the trinity. Their way of life is with Great Britain, their outlook and their future is with Great Britain and the next world-wide British system.

We have evolved a system in the Commonwealth which opens the door for developments of this kind. Today in the Commonwealth we have a group of sovereign States working together, living together in peace and in war, under a system that has stood the greatest strain to which any nations could be subjected. They are all sovereign States, they retain all the attributes and functions and symbols of sovereignty. Other neighbouring nations, therefore, living the same way of life, and with the same outlook, can with perfect safety say: 'That is our group; why are we not there? With full retention and maintenance of our sovereign status, we choose that grand company for our future in this dangerous world.'

It is naturally a question for these States of Western Europe to settle themselves. It is for them to say whether in the world as they have learned to know it, as history has proved it to be, it is safe for them to continue in the old paths of isolation and neutrality, or whether they should not help themselves by helping to create out of closer union with Great Britain a great European State, great not only in its world-wide ramifications, great not only as an Empire and a Commonwealth stretching over all the continents, but great as a power on this Continent, an equal partner with the other Colossi in the leadership of the Nations.

I think this trinity will be the stabilizing factor, the wall of power behind which the freedoms and the democracies of the world can be built up again. It will be the protecting wall. But I should like to have that trinity a trinity of equals. I should like to see all three of them equal in power and influence and in every respect. I should not like to see an unequal partnership.

I call this very explosive stuff, but we are living in an explosive world. I want you, Ladies and Gentlemen, to bear in mind that we are living in a world where we are forced to fundamental thinking and to a fundamental revision of old concepts. The old world that we knew has gone, and it will not return. To my mind, it is a question whether those who think alike and feel alike, whose interests and whose safety rest on the same broad human political basis should not be together in building up that splendid trinity to which we look forward for the future leadership.

So much for Europe, and I am saying nothing about America and Asia. It is all very speculative, and I am saying nothing dogmatic, but I am sure we shall have to do a great deal of fundamental thinking. I shall not be surprised to find that not only in this country but elsewhere outside this island, and especially in Western Europe, many thoughtful people are thinking in the same direction. They have learned much in this, the bitterest experience of their lives and the lives of their countries, and their minds are probably following some such line of thought as that to which I am giving expression.

Let me say a few words about the Commonwealth and Empire, because after all we remain a very great world community. It is not only the spiritual power which we command as no other group on Earth commands. It is not only that we possess that strength of soul, that inner freedom which is greater than all the freedoms of the Atlantic Charter, but we are also a very powerful group, scattered though we are over the world. And we must look to our own inner strength, our inner coherence, our system, our set-up and pattern, to see that it is on safe lines for the future.

What is the present set-up in our group? We are an Empire and a Commonwealth. We are a dual system. In that dual system we follow two different principles. In the Commonwealth we follow to the limit the principle of decentralization. In the Commonwealth this group of ours has become wholly decentralized as sovereign States. The members of the group maintain the unbreakable spiritual bonds which are stronger than steel, but in all matters of government and their internal and external concerns they are sovereign States.

In the Colonial Empire, on the other hand, we follow quite a different principle. We follow the opposite principle of centralization. And the centralization is focussed in this country, in London. The question that arises in my own mind, looking at the situation objectively, is whether such a situation can endure. To have the Empire centralized and the Commonwealth decentralized, to have the two groups developed on two different lines, raises grave questions for the future. Is this duality in our group safe? Should we not give very grave thought to this dualism in our system?

I hope you will forgive my doubts, Mr. Chairman, but I do not speak critically here. I am not a critic of the Empire. I am just thinking objectively, and giving expression to my concern. I am not out to criticize. But I know

as a fact that wherever I have gone in the Colonial Empire I have found criticism of this situation. Your own British people outside this island, living in Crown Colonies, are very critical and restive under this system which is centralized in London. It is not the nature of the beast, you know. The Britisher resents being run by others and from a distance. The question is whether there should not be an approach between the two systems so as to eliminate gradually this dualism and have a closer approach between the two, and bring Empire and Commonwealth closer together.

Following that line of thought it has seemed to me that our colonial system consists of too many units. If there is to be decentralization you will have to decentralize from the Colonial Office in London, and give administrative powers of all sorts, and all degrees, sometimes to very small units, or to some still in a very primitive stage of development, and that might be a risky thing to do.

Our colonial system consists of a very large number of units in all stages of development, and if there is to be decentralization and devolution of power and authority, it becomes, in my opinion, necessary to simplify the system, to tidy it up, to group smaller units, and, in many cases, to do away with units which have simply arisen as an accident by historic haphazard. They should never have existed as separate units, and in many cases their boundaries are quite indefensible. You know how this great show has grown up historically, by bits of history here and there, without any planning, and, of course, inevitably so. But the time has come, or the time may be coming now, when it is necessary to tidy up the show, to reduce the number of independent colonial units, to abolish a number of these separate administrations scattered pell-mell over the Colonial Empire, and to reduce the consequent expenditure which is a burden on the local peoples, many of them very poor, undeveloped, and with very small resources. It is a heavy burden on them, and their slender resources might be devoted to better purpose than carrying on a heavy administrative machine, perhaps beyond their capacity.

As I say, it is a question whether we should not abolish a number of units, and group others, and so tidy up the show. Then in such a case you can decentralize, and you can safely give larger powers and greater authority to those larger groups that you will thus create. Where it might be unsafe and unwise to give larger authority to a number of small units, it might be safe and wise, and the proper course, to give authority and to decentralize administrative power in the case of larger units grouped under a better arrangement.

I do not wish to go into details, but the case I know best is my own African continent, which contains a large number of British Colonies and Territories. There it seems to me quite a feasible proposition to group the British Colonies and Territories into definite groups. You have West Africa, you have East Africa, and you have Southern Africa. It is quite possible to group those

Colonies into larger units, each under a Governor-General, and abolish not a few of them that need not continue to enjoy a separate existence. In that way you will overcome the difficulty of the highly centralized system centring in London, which is irksome to the local people, is perhaps not serving their highest interests and their best development, and gives outsiders the occasion to blaspheme and to call the Colonial Empire an Imperialist concern, run in the economic interests of this country.

As you will solve this problem of centralization in the Colonial Empire you will also solve another equally important problem. And this brings me to the Commonwealth. In many of these cases of colonial reorganization where there will be new and larger colonial groups under a Governor-General, you will find that it is quite possible to bring these new groups closer to a neighbouring Dominion, and thereby interest the Dominion in the colonial group. In this way, instead of the Dominions being a show apart, so to say, having little or nothing to do with the Empire, and taking very little interest in it, these regional Dominions will become sharers and partners in the Empire. You will tighten up your whole show; you will create fresh links between the Empire and the Commonwealth, and create a new interest and life in the system as a whole. You will create better co-operation, and you will bring to bear on the problems of these colonial groups the experience and resources and leadership of the local Dominions, too. In this way you will tighten up your whole system, and instead of being two separate systems, the one decentralized and looking after its own affairs, and the other centralized and centred in London, you will have a much more logical co-operative and statesmanlike arrangement. Perhaps I am now over-simplifying here, but I simply put this picture before you as it has developed in my mind, the picture of a larger more co-operative world community. The time is coming when the colonial system will have to be simplified and tightened up, and to a large extent decentralized, and when the Dominions will have to be called in to play their part also in the new set-up.

Not only Great Britain and not only London, but the Dominions also should, by loose consultative arrangement, have a hand in this new colonial pattern, and the Dominions should also bring their resources and their experience to bear in the development of the Colonies. I think the suggestion is very well worth considering. Perhaps the new link could best be introduced by means of a system of regional conferences, which would include both the local Dominion and the regional colonial group of the area concerned. Perhaps to begin with nothing more is needed than merely an organized system of conferences between them, where they could meet and exchange ideas, and by means of which they could settle common policies, discuss common interests, and in that way link up the Dominions and the Colonies with the Mother-Country in a common more fruitful co-operation.

These, in broad outline, are our future arrangements as I see them. Not

only for our own future but also for the future of the world do I want to see our group strengthened and co-ordinated and elements of risk and of danger removed from its path. I want to see it launched forth after this war on the new paths of history with a better prospect of co-operation and collaboration among all its parts. I want a common pride to develop on the basis of better co-operation and understanding. I want the Dominions to take both interest and pride in the Colonies within their sphere, and in that way to create, in our great world-wide Commonwealth, a new *esprit de corps*, a common patriotism, and a larger human outlook.

(iv) *Extract from a speech of the Right Hon. the Earl of Halifax to the Toronto Board of Trade, 24 January 1944*¹

... I often think that to the outsider the British Commonwealth must surely appear an almost inexplicable freak of nature. We can imagine the bewilderment of an intelligent visitor from another planet on being confronted with its manifest contradictions. He would see something of which the component parts were united under a single Head, but constitutionally so ordered that while that Head, in his capacity as King in Great Britain, might be at war with a foreign power, as King in a Dominion he might continue to enjoy normal friendly relations with the enemy.

The visitor, baffled by this extraordinary confusion of functions, would suffer a further shock if he went on to study what actually happened in September 1939. He would find that on 3 September, Great Britain declared war on Germany; that Australia and New Zealand declared war on the same day, and that South Africa and Canada followed a few days later.

He might well wonder why. He would naturally be puzzled to determine what possible interest the Polish Corridor could have for a Canadian, or Danzig for an Australian, or the western frontier of Poland for a South African.

The Dominions had not been parties to the Treaty of Guarantee to Poland which was the immediate cause of Great Britain's action. They were themselves in no danger of direct attack. They had influenced, but had not been responsible for, the foreign policy of Great Britain. They had, it is true, been kept regularly informed of events, and been in constant consultation. But the day-to-day control of policy had been in the hands of a Minister whom they had not appointed, and who was responsible to a Parliament in which they were not represented. In fact as well as in theory, they were entirely uncommitted. The best proof of this reality is that Eire pursued, and still pursues today, a policy of abstention and neutrality.

Yet, not only did the great Dominions enter the war without hesitation; they showed at once that theirs was no formal acquiescence in a situation

¹ E. F. L. Wood (Earl of Halifax), *The American Speeches of the Earl of Halifax* (London, Oxford University Press, 1947), pp. 276-83.

which, though disagreeable in the extreme, could by no means be avoided. They realized that Great Britain was the first line of their own defense. They immediately threw all that they had in men, money, and material into the struggle. They held nothing back; and in the summer of 1940, when Britain faced the probability of invasion and the possibility of conquest, they were unflinching in their support. . . .

When the history of those fateful days is written, I do not doubt that the unshaken staunchness of the Commonwealth will be recognized as a decisive factor. If once again Britain was 'a bulwark for the cause of men', it was because when the storm broke she was so stoutly buttressed. And had Britain not been able to stand firm then, where would today be the United Nations, or where tomorrow the certainty of victory, or in the future, hope of security and peace?

So much is surely incontestable, but because it is incontestable, there is real danger that, with this experience before our eyes, we may be tempted to conclude that all is for the best in our affairs. Why, it may be said, should we tamper with what has so stoutly met the stern challenge of these times? I think we should pause before we accept that argument as final.

During the period of which I have spoken, between the Durham Report and the Statute of Westminster, the whole trend of development in the Dominions was towards equality of status. But there was hardly an equivalent effort towards securing what I would call equality of function. By that I mean that while the Statute of Westminster assured to each and every Dominion complete self-government, it perforce left unsolved the more obstinate problems arising in the fields of foreign policy and defense.

The essential unity of the Commonwealth of course owes much to the existence of a common Head, at once the living representative of the whole society before the world, and the embodiment of history and tradition in which all parts of the Commonwealth may feel themselves to have equal share and pride. In a sense not the less real because few might be able to translate the instinctive emotions into language, the Crown stands for an ideal of ordered life and service, and is thus the interpreter to all its subjects of standards and purposes, which at their best they would make their own. As a great Governor General of Canada, the late Lord Tweedsmuir, once wrote: 'In any deep stirring of heart, the people turn from the mechanism of government, which is their own handiwork and their servant, to that ancient, abiding thing behind governments, which they feel to be the symbol of their past achievement and their future hope.' . . .

But when this has been said, it remains a fact that, much as the unity of the commonwealth owed to a common Head and a common thought upon the things that matter most, it found little expression in outward form.

The right of each member to determine its own external affairs may mean a gain or it may mean a loss. It is plainly a loss if, with our essential unity of

ideal, the responsibility for action which represents that unity is not visibly shared by all. It is an immeasurable gain if on vital issues we can achieve a common foreign policy expressed not by a single voice but by the unison of many.

So, too, in the field of defense, while there must be individual responsibility, there must also be a unity of policy. I suggest that in the years of peace it was a weakness, which we should try to cure, that the weight of decision on many problems of defense was not more widely shared.

That in fact all the Dominions save one entered the war with us is not sufficient answer. Nor is the fact that they have made a total war effort which matches that of the United Kingdom. For we must rightly concern ourselves not so much with what happens when war has come, but with what in future we can do to prevent its coming. The magnificent response of the Dominions in 1939 was not, thank God, too late to save the cause for which the Commonwealth and Empire stood and stands; but there is a real sense in which it was too late to save the peace.

I speak frankly, as I know you would have me speak. On 3 September 1939, the Dominions were faced with a dilemma of which the whole world was aware. Either they must confirm a policy which they had had only partial share in framing, or they must stand aside and see the unity of the Commonwealth broken, perhaps fatally and for ever. It did not take them long to choose, and with one exception they chose war.

But the dilemma was there, and having occurred twice in twenty-five years, it may occur again. That is the point at which equality of function lags behind equality of status. The Dominions are free—absolutely free—to choose their path; but every time there is a crisis in international affairs, they are faced with the same inexorable dilemma from which there is no escape.

What then is the solution? Well, there are, broadly speaking, two roads which the Dominions may take. There is the road of national isolation. They can choose in peace, and, after full deliberation, the course that they rejected in 1939. They can say—and who should attempt to gainsay them?—that their foreign policy will be unconcerned with any but their own immediate national interests; that it will not reflect an underlying unity of ideal or strive towards unity in action; that they will neither defend others, nor expect others to defend them.

I am not going to argue against such an attitude, least of all in days like these, or in a city such as yours; beyond observing that isolationism is an old policy and that, in the shrinking world where we all have to live today, it is not an easy policy to pursue, and is unlikely to get easier.

Once upon a time, a great many people in Great Britain were isolationists in the sense that they wished to avoid entanglement in the affairs of Europe; just as in the United States there was an overwhelming opinion against

becoming involved in disputes outside the Western Hemisphere. Indeed it might be said that in 1939 almost every country—certainly almost every small country—was isolationist; and today the map of the world is strewn with the wreckage of small states. With such a record of failure before us, they would be optimists in any country who supposed that such a policy would be more successful in the future than it has been in the past.

But for most of us there is a stronger and more compelling argument towards choosing the second road. We believe that the British Empire has proved, not once or twice but many times, a powerful and beneficent world-force. We believe that without it the cause we uphold today would have been lost long ago; and therefore that the remedy for the difficulties which I have tried to describe is not that we and you should draw apart, but that we should try to fortify our partnership.

By that I do not mean that we should attempt to retrace our steps along the path that led from the Durham Report to the Statute of Westminster. To do so would be to run counter to the whole course of development in the Commonwealth. But what is, I believe, both desirable and necessary is that in all the common fields—Foreign Policy, Defense, Economic Affairs, Colonial Questions, and Communications—we should leave nothing undone to bring our people into closer unity of thought and action.

It may be that we shall find it desirable to maintain and extend our present wartime procedure of planning, and consultation, which itself adapted and extended the methods we practised in time of peace. The question admits of no easy answer. It should be constantly in our minds, and I have no doubt that it will be among the first problems to be considered, whenever the responsible ministers of the Crown from every part of the Commonwealth are able once more to meet together.

But there is one thought which I would like to leave with you now. The Statute of Westminster was in a sense a Declaration of Independence. But it was more than that. It was also a Declaration of Interdependence, a recognition that in the world of the twentieth century no country can live by itself and for itself alone. It did not attempt to make a stereotyped pattern or mould to which the Commonwealth must conform. Rather, it left the greatest latitude for development, in the conviction that, in working out our fate together, we should discover that independence and interdependence, so far from being incompatible, were not only complementary but necessary to each other.

For surely that is true. Today we begin to look beyond the war to the reordering of the world which must follow. We see three great Powers, the United States, Russia and China, great in numbers, areas, and natural resources. Side by side with them is the United Kingdom, with a population of less than 50,000,000, with a territory which could easily be contained in one of the larger States of the American Union, and with natural resources which,

though great in proportion to her size, are by themselves scarcely comparable with those of her companions.

In the company of these Titans, Britain, apart from the rest of the Commonwealth and Empire, could hardly claim equal partnership. It is none the less likely that, when the war is ended, Western Europe, as never before, will look to her for leadership and guidance. She has been the one inviolate fortress of freedom in the West. Once again her people have shown their ancient virtue. They have disclosed unsuspected reserves of strength. Much will be asked of them.

Yet, while they will assuredly emerge from this war with a new self-confidence and feel rightly proud of their achievement, they will certainly be poorer. They will have drawn heavily upon their man-power and resources. They will have spent their accumulated capital without stint. If, in the future, Britain is to play her part without assuming burdens greater than she can support, she must have with her in peace the same strength that has sustained her in this war. Not Great Britain only, but the British Commonwealth and Empire must be the fourth power in that group upon which, under Providence, the peace of the world will henceforth depend. There, summed up in a sentence, is the need as I see it.

To say this is to make no selfish claim. The unity of the Commonwealth is no mere British interest. So far from being an obstacle, it is a condition necessary to that working partnership with the United States, Russia, and China to which we look. If we are to play our rightful part in the preservation of peace, we can only play it as a Commonwealth, united, vital, and coherent. By so doing, and only by so doing, can we hope to achieve the high purposes to which we are dedicated by the suffering and sacrifice of war.

(v) *Extract from a speech of the Prime Minister, the Right Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King, in the Canadian House of Commons, 31 January 1944*¹

The Rt. Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King: . . . I wonder very much whether those who are speaking about more effective consultation, cooperation and coordination, begin to appreciate how much has been achieved in that direction, how completely there are existing throughout the British commonwealth of nations today most effective means of consultation and of cooperation in everything that affects policy, whether it is foreign policy or defence, or communications, or any other particular matter. Let me very quickly mention just what some of those means are.

In the first place there is the communication which takes place between the governments of the different countries. This government receives every day several communications from the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs bringing to our attention matters that are of concern to the different nations

¹ Canada, H. of C. Deb., 1944, vol. 1, pp. 39-42.

of the commonwealth. Our government communicates every day more or less, I think I can say every day, and sometimes sends several messages in a day, to the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs giving our views in these matters. There is direct communication between the prime ministers of the different nations of the commonwealth. The Prime Minister of Great Britain communicates direct with the Prime Minister of Canada, as he does with the Prime Minister of Australia and other nations of the commonwealth, and I communicate direct with him or with them when the situation is important enough to have these direct communications in addition to the messages which are sent through the Department of External Affairs to the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs.

Then there is present in Ottawa a representative of the British government in the person of the high commissioner, formerly a very distinguished member of British cabinets. The high commissioner of the United Kingdom is in a position to communicate direct with the members of the government, with myself personally, as he does very frequently, or with officials of the Department of External Affairs, on matters on which it is desirable to have fuller information than that which is likely to come in formal dispatches. But more than that we have also our high commissioner in Great Britain, and our high commissioner is in a position to bring to the attention of the Prime Minister and other ministers of Britain matters on which we feel we should like to give fuller information than is contained in more formal communications. The practice has grown up during the present war of having the high commissioners of all parts of the British empire resident in London meet daily with the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs. He has present with him on most occasions a representative of the foreign office, and at these interviews which take place between the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, who has been sitting in the cabinet at Downing street, there is communicated to the high commissioners what is important in reference to inter-imperial relations and matters of common concern with respect to the war.

A complete system of representation by high commissioners in different parts of the empire has grown up since the beginning of this war. Canada has had her high commissioner in Britain for many years, and we received the high commissioner from Great Britain for the first time in 1928. Since the outbreak of war, Canada has appointed high commissioners to all the self-governing dominions. We have our high commissioners in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Ireland and Newfoundland. These countries (except Newfoundland) have their high commissioners here in Ottawa.

In addition to that we have ministers or ambassadors in a number of the leading capitals. Our ministers are in touch with the ministers or the ambassadors there from other parts of the commonwealth and are in a position to gather a great deal of information which is communicated to the government at Ottawa, matters of common interest and concern; therefore, in all

of these particulars there is from day to day the fullest and most complete kind of consultation.

I should add that in addition to all of these communications which take place over the wires there are frequent visits by ministers from different nations of the commonwealth, particularly from Great Britain to Canada and frequent visits by our ministers to Great Britain. Scarcely a month goes by that we have not the honour of meeting either here or in Washington or elsewhere a minister of the British government who is on this continent on some important mission. Take the relations between Mr. Churchill and myself. I have had several meetings with Mr. Churchill since the war began, some of them at Washington, some in England and some here in Canada. All of this is a very much changed condition from what existed prior to the war. Means of travel have been so perfected that a minister can cross from Canada to Britain or vice versa in less than a day, and when any question comes up on which we feel it is necessary to have immediate personal consultation we arrange to see that personal consultation is brought about here or overseas.

I should add in addition to that what I think is most important of all, and it is an answer to those who talk about having some imperial council that is going to decide commonwealth policies. We have today a continuing conference of cabinet councils of the commonwealth, a continuing conference of cabinets of the commonwealth dealing with matters of common concern. Let me explain what I mean. When any question comes up that is of common concern to the commonwealth in whole or in part, a communication comes, say from London, if that is the source at which the question arises, to our government. A similar communication is sent to the premiers of other governments of the commonwealth. Immediately I am in a position, as Prime Minister, to take that particular question before my colleagues in the cabinet; and when I give advice to the British government on any matter I am not giving advice by myself alone, in the atmosphere of London, but I am giving advice based on what judgment I am able to form after consulting with the members of the government from all parts of Canada, each of whom has his immediate responsibility to this parliament of Canada which has its responsibility to the people of Canada. I ask: how can conferences between cabinets be carried out more effectively than that?

The objection I have to going over to London to imperial conferences to try to settle policies, if that should be the object, is that I am at a complete disadvantage in those circumstances; and when I speak of myself it is quite impersonal; I am referring to anyone who holds the office of Prime Minister of Canada. The Prime Minister attending in London meets an entire cabinet. He may be entirely alone. He has not with him all his colleagues; he has with him very few colleagues, unless the business of his own country is to be neglected while he is away. More than that, however, he is without his expert

advisers, who are much needed in dealing with great questions of peace or war. On the other hand every minister of the cabinet in London has his expert advisers, when a certain issue is up for discussion, either seated beside him or in an adjoining room, and he is in a position to command their views on any suggestion that may be made. Further, he is in a position to confer with all his colleagues and make his statement to the conference based upon opinions formed in that way. As I say, unless one is prepared to take with him colleagues and experts, and to allow the government of Canada to be carried on minus these responsible ministers and officials while an imperial conference is being conducted, one is not in a position to discuss matters as they should be discussed, and in the light of the responsibilities of the situation, as one would wish to discuss them.

But when, as today, we have this system under which every question brought up is discussed fully in the cabinets of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Great Britain; when views are interchanged within a very short time, what more effective means could possibly be found of obtaining a consensus of view, an approach toward common policy, and a coordination of policies? I am one hundred per cent. for close consultation, close co-operation and effective coordination of policy on all matters of common concern between the different nations of the British commonwealth. By all means let us within the British commonwealth be as united as we possibly can in thought and action, but let us seek in regard to other countries also to effect a closer cooperation and coordination of policies, which will make for the sort of world organization we hope to see prevail in future in this world.

This leads me to conclude with just a reference—

Mr. Blackmore: Would the right hon. gentleman permit a question? Ever since Lord Halifax delivered his address I have been wondering what further elements of coordination or cooperative machinery he had in mind than those which the Prime Minister has outlined. Would it be asking too much to request that the Prime Minister give us some idea of what further might be required?

Mr. Mackenzie King: I would not care to attempt in any way to interpret the views of Lord Halifax, but in order to make the position quite clear I think I should say that Lord Halifax was speaking entirely for himself. I have been informed that he was not making any pronouncement on behalf of the British government. He was speaking as an individual who came to Canada to address a large organization in Toronto, and he gave his views on a subject which has been very close to his heart all through his lifetime. I believe a close reading of the address by Lord Halifax will show that in many particulars it has not been understood as he would wish to have it understood. Lord Halifax is a political philosopher as well as a very eminent statesman. He was reviewing the past century and the developments which have taken place during that time, and allowing his mind to travel into the next hundred

years as to the possible changes that might be necessary in commonwealth organization. I do not think he meant to do more than put before the particular audience he was addressing, and through it before the public, certain thoughts which he believed it would be well to be considered by all of us who have the future in mind. But I think it was unfortunate, as it has certainly proved, that the speech should have been delivered at this particular time, because it has raised certain issues; and I am speaking here this afternoon very much against my own will in developing this theme at all. I am doing so only because the hon. gentleman whom I am immediately facing, the leader of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (Mr. Coldwell) and the hon. gentleman who just interrupted me, the leader of the Social Credit party, have given their views on the subject which was brought up, and on that account I feel it necessary to give mine.

Mr. Blackmore: I am just wondering if perhaps the hon. gentleman from Britain was not expressing the very idea that has been outlined by the Prime Minister. The right hon. gentleman will remember that my comment was to the effect that the ideas expressed were good but that it was unfortunate he did not tell us how they might be put into effect.

Mr. Mackenzie King: One concrete issue in external policy has been raised not only by Lord Halifax but also by Field Marshal Smuts on which I feel that I should state my position. In this I am stating the position of the government on what was said in recent speeches by these two eminent public men. I shall read what I have to say on this matter because I feel the great importance of any utterances on matters of this kind at this time, but I think it well that the position of the government should be stated. I should like to have hon. gentlemen immediately opposite make an equally clear statement, some time during this session, as to their position.

Mr. Graydon: May I ask the Prime Minister if he prepared the speech he is about to deliver?

Mr. Mackenzie King: Yes, I prepared this. These are my own views and the views of this government.

A concrete issue in external policy has been raised in recent speeches delivered by Lord Halifax and Field Marshal Smuts. It relates to the domination of certain great powers. Both speeches expressed the view that the future peace of the world depended on the attainment of an equal partnership in strength and influence between the great powers among the united nations. Both took the position that the resources and manpower of the British isles were too small to enable the United Kingdom to compete with the United States and the Soviet Union in power and authority after the war. Both, therefore, argued that it was necessary that the United Kingdom should have the constant support of other countries, in order to preserve a proper balance. Field Marshal Smuts thought that this might be achieved by a close association between the United Kingdom and 'the smaller democracies in western

Europe'; he had little to say of the place of the British commonwealth as such. Lord Halifax on the other hand declared:

Not Great Britain only, but the British commonwealth and empire, must be the fourth power in that group upon which, under Providence, the peace of the world will henceforth depend.

With what is implied in the argument employed by both these eminent public men I am unable to agree.

It is indeed true beyond question that the peace of the world depends on preserving on the side of peace a large superiority of power, so that those who wish to disturb the peace can have no chance of success. But I must ask whether the best way of attaining this is to seek a balance of strength between three or four great powers. Should we not, indeed must we not, aim at attaining the necessary superiority of power by creating an effective international system inside which the cooperation of all peace-loving countries is freely sought and given?

It seems to me not to be a matter of matching manpower and resources, or, in other words, military and industrial potential, between three or four dominant states. What we must strive for is close cooperation among those great states themselves, and all other like-minded countries. Behind the conception expressed by Lord Halifax and Field Marshal Smuts, there lurks the idea of inevitable rivalry between the great powers. Could Canada, situated as she is geographically between the United States and the Soviet Union, and at the same time a member of the British commonwealth, for one moment give support to such an idea?

The Moscow declaration on general security forecast a system which would involve for its effectiveness, firm commitments by all peace-loving states to do their share in preserving peace. Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union were all represented at the Moscow Conference. What would seem now to be suggested is that the prime Canadian commitment should be to pursue in all matters of external relations—'in foreign policy, defence, economic affairs, colonial questions and communications', to cite the words of Lord Halifax—a common policy to be framed and executed by all the governments of the commonwealth. I maintain that apart from all questions as to how that common policy is to be reached, or enforced, such a conception runs counter to the establishment of effective world security, and therefore is opposed to the true interests of the commonwealth itself.

We are certainly determined to see the closest collaboration continue between Canada, the United Kingdom and other commonwealth countries. Nothing that I am saying should be construed as supporting any other view than this. Collaboration inside the British commonwealth has, and will continue to have, a special degree of intimacy. When, however, it comes to dealing with the great issues which determine peace or war, prosperity or

depression, it must not, in aim or method, be exclusive. In meeting world issues of security, employment and social standards we must join not only with commonwealth countries but with all likeminded states, if our purposes and ideals are to prevail. Our commitments on these great issues must be part of a general scheme, whether they be on a world basis or regional in nature.

We look forward, therefore, to close collaboration in the interests of peace not only inside the British commonwealth, but also with all friendly nations, small as well as great.

6. *Commonwealth Consultation in Practice, 1944-8* *'A Continuing Conference of Cabinets'*

(i) *Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting, 1944: Declaration of 16 May 1944¹*

WE, The King's Prime Ministers of the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, have now, for the first time since the outbreak of the war, been able to meet together to discuss common problems and future plans. The representatives of India at the War Cabinet and the Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia have joined in our deliberations and are united with us.

At this memorable meeting, in the fifth year of the war, we give thanks for deliverance from the worst perils which have menaced us in the course of this long and terrible struggle against tyranny. Though hard and bitter battles lie ahead, we now see before us, in the ever-growing might of the forces of the United Nations, and in the defeats already inflicted on the foe, by land, by sea and in the air, the sure presage of our future victory.

To all our Armed Forces who in many lands are preserving our liberties with their lives, and to the peoples of all our countries whose efforts, fortitude and conviction have sustained the struggle, we express our admiration and gratitude. We honour the famous deeds of the forces of the United States and of Soviet Russia, and pay our tribute to the fighting tenacity of the many states and nations joined with us. We remember indeed the prolonged, stubborn resistance of China, the first to be attacked by the authors of world-aggression, and we rejoice in the unquenchable spirit of our comrades in every country still in the grip of the enemy. We shall not turn from the conflict till they are restored to freedom. Not one who marches with us shall be abandoned.

We have examined the part which the British Empire and Commonwealth of Nations should bear against Germany and Japan, in harmony with our Allies. We are in cordial agreement with the general plans which have been laid before us. As in the days when we stood all alone against Germany, we affirm our inflexible and unwearrying resolve to continue in the general war with the utmost of our strength until the defeat and downfall of our cruel, barbarous

¹ Text issued by the Dominions Office.

foes has been accomplished. We shall hold back nothing to reach the goal and bring to the speediest end the agony of mankind.

We have also examined together the principles which determine our foreign policies, and their application to current problems. Here too we are in complete agreement.

We are unitedly resolved to continue, shoulder to shoulder with our Allies, all needful exertions which will aid our Fleets, Armies and Air Forces during the war and thereafter to make sure of an enduring peace. We trust and pray that the victory, which will certainly be won, will carry with it a sense of hope and freedom for all the world. It is our aim that, when the storms and passions of war have passed away, all countries now overrun by the enemy shall be free to decide for themselves their future form of democratic government.

Mutual respect and honest conduct between nations is our chief desire. We are determined to work with all peace-loving peoples in order that tyranny and aggression shall be removed or, if need be, struck down wherever it raises its head. The peoples of the British Empire and Commonwealth of Nations willingly make their sacrifices to the common cause. We seek no advantages for ourselves at the cost of others. We desire the welfare and social advance of all nations and that they may help each other to better and broader days.

We affirm that after the war a World Organization to maintain peace and security should be set up and endowed with the necessary power and authority to prevent aggression and violence.

In a world torn by strife, we have met here in unity. That unity finds its strength, not in any formal bond but in the hidden springs from which human action flows. We rejoice in our inheritance of loyalties and ideals, and proclaim our sense of kinship to one another. Our system of free association has enabled us, each and all, to claim a full share of the common burden. Although spread across the globe, we have stood together through the stresses of two World Wars, and have been welded the stronger thereby. We believe that when victory is won and peace returns, this same free association, this inherent unity of purpose, will make us able to do further service to mankind.

(Signed) WINSTON S. CHURCHILL,
*Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great
Britain and Northern Ireland.*

(Signed) W. L. MACKENZIE KING,
Prime Minister of Canada.

(Signed) JOHN CURTIN,
Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia.

(Signed) PETER FRASER,
Prime Minister of New Zealand.

(Signed) J. C. SMUTS, F.M.,
Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa.

- (ii) *Extract from an address by the Prime Minister of Canada, the Right Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King, to Members of both Houses of the Parliament of the United Kingdom, 11 May 1944¹*

... Without attempting to distinguish between the terms 'British Empire' and 'British Commonwealth', but looking rather to the evolution of this association of free nations, may I give to you what I believe to be the secret of its strength and of its unity, and the vision which I cherish of its future. 'We . . . who look forward to larger brotherhoods and more exact standards of social justice, value and cherish the British Empire because it represents, more than any other similar organization has ever represented, the peaceful co-operation of all sorts of men in all sorts of countries, and because we think it is, in that respect at least, a model of what we hope the whole world will some day become.'

This vision, I need scarcely say, is not mine alone; indeed, the words in which I have sought to portray it are not even my own. They were spoken thirty-seven years ago by one whose fame today is not surpassed in any part of the world if, indeed, it has been equalled at any time in the world's history. They are the words of the present Prime Minister of Britain, uttered by Mr. Churchill in 1907. As they continue to reverberate down the years, they bring fresh inspiration to all who owe allegiance to the Crown and increasing hope to mankind.

Visions of youth sometimes

die away,

And fade into the light of common day.

They fade not because the vision is ever wholly lost, but because resolution wavers, because determination fails, because of seemingly insuperable obstacles. It has not been so with Mr. Churchill. He has not to ask

Whither is fled the visionary gleam?

Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

The glory and the dream—are they not being realized, at this very hour, in the strength and unity of the nations of the Commonwealth?

From time to time it is suggested that we should seek new methods of communication and consultation.

I believe very strongly in close consultation, close co-operation, and effective co-ordination of policies. What more effective means of co-operation could have been found than those which, despite all the handicaps of war, have worked with such complete success?

It is true we have not, sitting in London continuously, a visible Imperial War Cabinet or Council. But we have, what is much more important, though invisible, a continuing conference of the Cabinets of the Commonwealth.

¹ Text issued by the Dominions Office.

It is a conference of Cabinets which deals, from day to day and not infrequently from hour to hour, with policies of common concern.

When decisions are taken they are not the decisions of Prime Ministers or other individual Ministers, meeting apart from their own colleagues and away from their own countries. They are decisions reached after mature consideration by all members of the Cabinet of each country, with a full consciousness of their immediate responsibility to their respective Parliaments.

Let us, by all means, seek to improve where we can. But in considering new methods of organization we cannot be too careful to see that, to our own peoples, the new methods will not appear as an attempt to limit their freedom of decision or, to peoples outside the Commonwealth, as an attempt to establish a separate bloc. Let us beware lest in changing the form we lose the substance; or, for appearance's sake, sacrifice reality. I am told that, somewhere, over the grave of one who did not know when he was well off, there is the following epitaph: 'I was well; I wanted to be better; and here I am.'

In the passage I quoted from Mr. Churchill a moment ago I gave only a part of what he said. He set forth, as well, the means of realizing his vision of peaceful co-operation. 'Let us', he said, '. . . seek to impress, year after year, upon the British Empire, an inclusive and not an exclusive character.'

Like the nations of which it is composed, the British Commonwealth has within itself a spirit which is not exclusive, but the opposite of exclusive. Therein lies its strength. That spirit expresses itself in co-operation. Therein lies the secret of its unity. Co-operation is capable of indefinite expansion. Therein lies the hope of the future.

It is of the utmost importance to the Commonwealth that there should continue to be the greatest possible co-operation among its members. In like manner it is, I believe, of the utmost importance to the future of mankind that, after the war, there should be the greatest possible co-operation among the nations of the world.

Our wartime co-operation is not the product of formal institutional unity; it is the result of agreement upon policies of benefit to all. Moreover, they are policies that make an appeal 'to all sorts of men in all sorts of countries', provided only they are men of good will.

If, at the close of hostilities, the strength and unity of the Commonwealth are to be maintained, those ends will be achieved not by policies which are exclusive, but by policies which can be shared with other nations. I am firmly convinced that the way to maintain our unity is to base that unity upon principles which can be extended to all nations. I am equally sure that the only way to maintain world unity is to base it upon principles that can be universally applied.

The war has surely convinced all nations, from the smallest to the greatest, that there is no national security to be found in the isolation of any nation

or group of nations. The future security of peace-loving nations will depend upon the extent and effectiveness of international co-operation. . . .

For my part, I profoundly believe that both the security and the welfare of the nations of the British Commonwealth and, in large measure, the security and welfare of all peace-loving nations will depend on the capacity of the nations of the Commonwealth to give leadership in the pursuit of policies which, in character, are not exclusive but inclusive. How far such policies can be successfully pursued will, of course, depend on the extent to which other nations are prepared to pursue similar policies. But let us, at least, wherever that is possible, give the lead that is in the interests of the world as a whole.

You, Prime Minister, have referred to the importance of strengthening the fraternal association that now exists between the British Commonwealth and the United States.

Over many years Canada's relations with the United States have been especially friendly. Throughout the war, we have followed the path of co-operation. We like to think that our country has had some part in bringing about a harmony of sentiment between the United States and the whole British Commonwealth. That harmony is the foundation of the close military collaboration which is proving so fruitful in this war.

It will ever be a prime object of Canadian policy to work for the maintenance of the fraternal association of the British and American peoples. When peace comes it is our highest hope that the peoples of the British Commonwealth and the United States will continue to march at each other's side, united more closely than ever. But we equally hope that they will march in a larger company, in which all the nations united today in defence of freedom will remain united in the service of mankind. . . .

Our first duty is to win the war. But to win the war, we must keep the vision of a better future. We must never cease to strive for its fulfilment. No lesser vision will suffice to gain the victory over those who seek world domination and human enslavement. No lesser vision will enable us fittingly to honour the memory of the men and women who are giving their all for freedom and justice.

In the realization of this vision, the governments and peoples who owe common allegiance to the Crown may well find the new meaning and significance of the British Commonwealth and Empire. It is for us to make of our association of free British nations 'a model of what we hope the whole world will some day become'.

(iii) *Extract from a speech of the Prime Minister, the Right Hon. J. Curtin, in the Australian House of Representatives, 17 July 1944, on the Prime Ministers' Conference'*

. . . 'The declaration issued at the conclusion of the Prime Ministers'

¹ Australia, H. of R. Deb., vol. 179, pp. 38-41.

Conference was limited to a general statement of adherence to a world organization—

We affirm that after the war a world organization to maintain peace and security should be set up and endowed with the necessary power and authority to prevent aggression and violence.

I said last December that the evolution of the British Commonwealth has exemplified the manner in which autonomous nations can co-operate on matters of mutual interest, and I made certain suggestions for improved machinery for Empire consultation and co-operation. During the Prime Ministers' Conference, I put forward the following proposals:—

The aim of all machinery must be to provide for full and continuous consultation. This consultation must be consistent with the sovereign control of its policy by each government.

No machinery which may be established can be superior to, or more satisfactory than, the periodical conferences of Prime Ministers of the various parts of the Empire, provided they are held frequently. The place of meeting should not necessarily always be in London.

The meetings of Prime Ministers should be supplemented and reinforced by meetings of other Ministers of the British Commonwealth as occasion may require to deal with important questions of mutual interest, such as trade and communications. Again, these conferences need not necessarily be held always in the one place.

There should also be meetings at the official level between officers from the various parts of the Empire to deal with technical matters or to carry out exploratory discussions, with a view to their subsequent consideration by governments.

The procedure to be followed in London between conferences of Prime Ministers should be monthly meetings of the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, the High Commissioners of the Dominions, and the regular daily meeting of the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs and all the High Commissioners, which is the present established practice.

In addition, there is the ordinary day-to-day machinery for dealing with the three groups of important questions—foreign affairs, defence and financial, economic, and social questions. The External Affairs staffs in the respective High Commissioner's offices are in close contact with the Foreign Office and each dominion would create such machinery and employ such methods as appear desirable in the light of its own circumstances. All the Dominions have their service representatives in the United Kingdom. The positions of individual dominions differ so greatly that the machinery and procedure must be appropriate to the circumstances of each.

During the war, there has been a great expansion of co-operation in regard to financial, economic and social questions. It is desirable that this co-operation should be maintained and increased. It was suggested that so much individual

co-operation has now been established that the time was opportune for bringing it under a central direction. It was proposed that an examination be made by a small committee, representative of the United Kingdom and Dominion Governments, as to whether some centralization of effort is desirable.

Mr. Churchill readily expressed his willingness to have monthly meetings with the Dominion representatives in London and the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, and this met with general agreement. The Dominion Prime Ministers undertook to consult their Governments on my other proposals, and certain additional suggestions that were made during the discussion. I refer briefly to the views that were expressed:

The United Kingdom Government put forward what were described as certain lines of thought in regard to co-operation in Empire defence. They did not proceed beyond the essential idea of the machinery that existed in peace in the shape of the Committee of Imperial Defence, and certain principles of Imperial defence which had been laid down by earlier Imperial conferences.

The Prime Minister of Canada, in his address to the British Parliament a few days earlier, had said:—

From time to time, it is suggested we should seek new methods of communication and consultation. I believe very strongly in close consultation, close co-operation, and effective co-ordination of policies. What more effective means of co-operation could have been found than those which, in spite of all the handicaps of war, have worked with such complete success?

During the conference, Mr. Mackenzie King said that, whilst there was much in my proposals with which he was in agreement, the questions raised would have to be carefully considered along with the whole range of matters connected with world security.

The Prime Minister of South Africa did not express an opinion on my proposals.

The Prime Minister of New Zealand said that there was little in my proposals with which he disagreed, and mentioned that the Australian-New Zealand Agreement provides for co-operation in regional defence in the South-West and South Pacific Areas.

As I mentioned earlier, the positions of individual dominions differ greatly in regard to defence, and our experiences in this war have varied accordingly. Canada has not been directly threatened in this war, and, as a consequence, its military effort has been an overseas one. Mr. Mackenzie King explained to the conference that its defence arrangements are closely interlocked with the United States of America through a permanent Joint War and Defence Board. South Africa, like Canada, is favourably located from a defence aspect, and has not been directly threatened. Its military effort has been in Northern Africa, which General Smuts considers is within the European strategical zone.

I envy our sister dominions the good fortune of their geographical and strategical locations, but our experience has been entirely different from theirs. I quoted earlier the graceful tribute paid by the Prime Minister of Canada to the way in which Australia had met the threat of invasion, and the steps which we had taken to deal with it. That situation brought out the need for improvements in the machinery at the points of contact with Great Britain and the United States of America. As a result, an accredited representative was appointed to the United Kingdom War Cabinet with the right to be heard in the formulation and direction of policy. We also sought the appointment of a Pacific War Council at Washington, but when it failed to function, we achieved our objective by establishing a direct link between the Australian Government and the Commander-in-Chief, South-West Pacific Area.

I do not seek to convert my friend, Mr. Mackenzie King, to my view, any more than I can accept, from the Australian point of view, his opinion that the present means of co-operation has worked with complete success. A pre-eminent characteristic of the British Commonwealth is its diversity within the framework of its unity. My proposals for improved machinery for Empire co-operation were accordingly put forward on the basis of what Australia considers to be necessary in the light of its recent experience. I pointed out to the conference that though we all hope to be able to maintain peace by the system of world security which it is our aim to build, the experience of the British Commonwealth has shown that the growth of co-operation has been slow, notwithstanding that we have so much in common. It remains to be seen how quickly and effectively we can develop and maintain a system of world security, but we dare not fail our own people in providing the security for which they so greatly yearn. In doing so, by co-operation amongst ourselves, we also contribute to world security at large. The one is complementary to the other.

I also observed that the security of any part of the British Empire in the future will rest on three safeguards, each wider in its scope than the other—

There is the system of collective security which can be organized on a world and regional basis.

Then there is the degree of Empire co-operation which can be established. This is a matter of bilateral or multilateral planning and agreement according to the strategical position of the particular part of the Empire concerned, the views of its government and those of the other governments that may be concerned.

Finally, there is national defence, the policy for which is purely the responsibility of the government concerned. The extent and nature of a government's defence policy will be influenced by the degree of reliance that can be placed on the other two safeguards.

These safeguards are complementary to each other, none is exclusive of the others, and plans should exist to give effect to them all. . . .

The conference was described by Mr. Churchill as one of the important milestones in the history of our united association. General Smuts said that, in his experience of the last 40 years, he could recall no Imperial Conference which compared with it, both in the magnitude of the issues raised and in the spirit of mutual understanding that prevailed throughout.

An outstanding impression was the great significance and importance both to the members of the British Commonwealth and to the world, of the maintenance and development of our unity and co-operation. The strength of Britain has been described as her 'alliance potential', when she speaks with the united voice and authority of the whole British Commonwealth. This is also true of the Dominions, for individually we are weak, but united we are strong. Co-operation in regard to our policies should, therefore, be such as to ensure that, mutually, each commands the support of the others. The British Commonwealth has demonstrated how this can be done among self-governing nations, without any infringement of their sovereignty.

I was also impressed with the high principles which governed the approach to all questions. The meeting was not an exclusive British Commonwealth bloc seeking its own selfish ends. The discussions were directed not only to strengthening the noble ties that unite us, but also to the advancement of the greater cause of humanity at large. The success of this association of free nations has been described as due to a simple human code founded on fair play, fair dealing, tolerance and justice, and the right of each to live his own life freely, so long as he does not interfere with the rights of others to live their lives equally freely. This is the common ground on which the members of the British Commonwealth meet like-minded nations in the wider amplitude of a world organization which has as its aim the welfare of all men everywhere.

(iv) *Extract from a speech of the Prime Minister, the Right Hon. P. Fraser, in the New Zealand House of Representatives, 7 August 1944, expressing satisfaction with the existing methods of consultation*¹

. . . About British Commonwealth co-operation there was a good deal said before the Conference, but, when it met, general satisfaction was expressed by the various Prime Ministers at the measure of co-operation and consultation already established. My own attitude was that, if I could be shown any scheme that would be better, I would be in favour of it; but I asked that we should examine some definite scheme. A new development arising from the Conference was the institution of monthly meetings of High Commissioners with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Mr. Churchill, to discuss the current war situation and problems. The daily meetings of the High

¹ New Zealand, H. of R. Deb., vol. 265, p. 184.

Commissioners with the Secretary of State for the Dominions still continue. There are daily meetings—I think, five days of the week—between Lord Cranborne and the High Commissioners; but now they are to be supplemented by monthly meetings with Mr. Churchill, who will review the war, and discuss the war situation on different fronts with the High Commissioners, who will then be able to place at the disposal of the respective Governments the results of those discussions. I can say that the London Conference was in every way an outstanding success—all issues were fully discussed.

(v) *Extract from a statement by the Prime Minister, the Right Hon. C. R. Attlee, in the House of Commons, 8 May 1946, on the nature of Commonwealth consultation*

*The Prime Minister (Mr. Attlee):*¹ I should like, with your permission, Mr. Speaker, to make the following statement: In the course of yesterday's Debate on Egypt, I was asked whether the Dominion Governments were consulted before the announcement was made in Cairo, and whether they agreed to its terms and timing. I replied that they were fully consulted, and that they agreed that this was the best method of approach, though I made it clear that the responsibility for the decision rested entirely with His Majesty's Government here.

I am anxious that there should be no misunderstanding on this point and I should like to take this opportunity of making clear the nature and purpose of our consultation with the Dominions on matters of this kind. It is our practice and our duty, as members of the British Commonwealth, to keep other members of the Commonwealth fully and continuously informed of all matters which we are called upon to decide, but which may affect Commonwealth interests. The object is to give them an opportunity of expressing their views in confidence, if they so desire. These views are taken fully into account, but the decision must be ours, and the other Governments are not asked, and would not wish, to share the responsibility for it. Dominion Governments follow the same practice. This course was followed with regard to these negotiations with Egypt. The Dominion Governments were kept fully informed by telegram and, in addition, we took the opportunity of personal discussion with the Australian, New Zealand and South African Ministers now in London. I hope that this general statement will be a guide to the House as to the nature of Commonwealth consultation in such matters, and will indicate the difficulty in which His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom are placed if pressed to disclose the views expressed by Dominion Governments in such circumstances.

So much for general principles. I wish now to deal with one particular

¹ H. of C. Deb., vol. 422, col. 1069-70.

remark which I made yesterday. I said that the Dominions had 'agreed' to our method of approach to the revision of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty. I think the word 'agreed' may have given a wrong impression. There was full information and discussion. The Dominion Ministers were not called upon to express agreement in a matter which was one of United Kingdom responsibility, but they realized that the line of approach had to be decided by the United Kingdom in the light of the conditions and of the advice given to them by their civil and military advisers on the spot. This statement, I may add, is made after consultation with the Dominion Ministers now in London, and has their full agreement.

Mr. Eden: While I am grateful to the right hon. Gentleman for making this statement, and while I do not want in any way to challenge the doctrine he has laid down, as to the method of general Dominion consultation, I would like to ask him a question in order to make sure that I am clear about the present position. Do I understand that while the Egyptian situation was fully discussed with the Dominion Governments, they did not commit themselves in any way in support of the action announced yesterday by His Majesty's Government?

The Prime Minister: Yes, Sir, I was endeavouring to make that perfectly clear. I should apologize to the House. I was led away in the course of the Debate to say more than I should have said. The fact is that in these consultations there is no endeavour to come to a decision. The last thing in the world I should like to do would be either to embarrass my colleagues from the Dominions, or put upon them any responsibility which this Government must take.

(vi) *Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting, 1946: Final Communiqué,
23 May 1946¹*

In the course of the last five weeks the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, the Right Honourable C. R. Attlee, and several of his Cabinet colleagues, the Prime Minister of Canada, the Right Honourable W. L. Mackenzie King, the Prime Minister of Australia, the Right Honourable J. B. Chifley, and the Australian Minister of External Affairs, the Right Honourable H. V. Evatt, the Deputy Prime Minister of New Zealand, the Right Honourable W. Nash, and the Prime Minister of South Africa, Field Marshal the Right Honourable J. C. Smuts, have engaged in informal consultations on a number of questions arising in connexion with the post-war settlements.

The representatives of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa desire to place on record their sincere thanks to the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom for presiding over the meetings and for his constant and valuable help.

¹ Text issued by the Dominions Office.

The discussions have been in the nature of an informal exchange of views. They have covered a broad field and have contributed greatly to the elucidation of many problems and to a mutual understanding of the issues involved. Among the subjects on which views were exchanged were the draft peace treaties with Italy, Roumania, Bulgaria, Hungary and Finland; the future of Germany; security responsibilities and arrangements for liaison between British Commonwealth Governments on military affairs; and economic and welfare co-operation in the South Pacific and South-East Asia. The opportunity was taken for consultations on other current issues and matters of mutual interest, including separate consultations between individual United Kingdom and Dominion Ministers on questions specially affecting one or two countries only.

At the conclusion of the meetings, the assembled representatives of the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, place on record their appreciation of the value of this series of consultations, which exemplifies the system of free discussion and exchange of view that characterizes the relations of the countries of the British Commonwealth. The existing methods of consultation have proved their worth. They include a continuous exchange of information and comment between the different members of the Commonwealth. They are flexible and can be used to meet a variety of situations and needs, both those where the responsibility is on one member alone, and where the responsibility may have to be shared. They are peculiarly appropriate to the character of the British Commonwealth, with its independent members who have shown by their sacrifices in the common cause their devotion to kindred ideals and their community of outlook. While all are willing to consider and adopt practical proposals for developing the existing system, it is agreed that the methods now practised are preferable to any rigid centralized machinery. In their view such centralized machinery would not facilitate, and might even hamper, the combination of autonomy and unity which is characteristic of the British Commonwealth and is one of their great achievements.

They reaffirm their belief in the efficacy of free and constant consultation and co-operation not only within the British Commonwealth but also in the wider international sphere. They are determined to do everything in their power to maintain in time of peace the historic co-operation achieved by the Allies in time of war. They look forward to the steady development throughout the whole world of closer international co-operation based on increasing mutual confidence and devoted to the raising of standards of living and the promotion of democratic liberty. Their Governments and peoples are determined to give the fullest support to the United Nations Organization, not only as a foundation of peace and security, but also as a means for promoting economic progress and social welfare.

(vii) *Extracts from speeches of the Right Hon. the Viscount Bruce and the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, the Right Hon. the Viscount Addison, in the House of Lords, 17 February 1948, on further proposals for strengthening the machinery of consultation.*

*Viscount Bruce of Melbourne,*¹ Moved: That this House is of the opinion that the closest relations within the Commonwealth and Empire are essential.

My Lords, I have placed on the Order Paper the Motion that stands in my name, because I feel that there is no question of greater importance in the difficult and even perilous times through which we are passing than the question of relations within the Commonwealth and Empire. I think it is the general feeling throughout all British countries that Commonwealth and Empire relations, co-operation and consultation, are of the greatest importance. We have got to clear our minds, however—and clear them very definitely—on these three issues: Why are those relations so vitally important to all British people? What is the present position with regard to consultation and co-operation between the various British countries? And if the position at the present moment is not really a satisfactory one, what should we do in order to put the matter right? I propose to deal with those three points separately.

I will take first the question: Why is the closest possible consultation and co-operation between all the great British countries so essential? To see the picture clearly, we have to cast our minds into the future and try and visualize what sort of a world we are likely to live in. So far as I can see, there are three broad possibilities. The first is that we are going to live in a world in which there will be full international co-operation in dealing with all the great political and economic problems that confront us, a world in which the ideals of the United Nations will be achieved and all its specialized agencies will operate effectively and play their respective parts. The second world that I visualize, if we cannot obtain that full co-operation, is one in which there will be groupings of nations on a regional or other basis, in which the United Nations organization will operate to some extent but will not achieve all that we hoped of it, and in which the specialized agencies will play a limited part. The third and most disastrous world I visualize is one in which it is impossible to get any real co-operation, in which all attempts to achieve it break down and all our present ideals disappear—a world dominated by power politics and by the ruthless ideals that some nations seem now to hold.

If we are going to achieve that first and best world of real international co-operation, surely it is vital that we, the British peoples, should unitedly make our great contribution to it. If it is going to be the second world, in which there will be the grouping of nations, then surely there is no more natural group than that of all the great British nations scattered throughout

¹ H. of L. Deb., vol. 153, coll. 1102-8.

the world. If it is going to be the third world, where there will be no real international co-operation, then we shall need each other in order to maintain our individual integrity and safeguard our existing position. We shall need to co-operate together if we are to save our whole economic life and maintain the standards of living of our people. I venture to suggest that we should project our minds into the future. But whatever sort of world we are going to get, I suggest that it is imperative that we, the British people, with our ideals and all the things we stand for, should consult, co-operate and work together.

I come now to my second point. What is the present position? Have we the machinery necessary for that consultation and co-operation? Are we today really consulting and co-operating? I venture to say that we are not, and I will give my reasons for it. Before I do that, however, I think we should arrive at some exact definition of what we mean by consultation and co-operation. I suggest that what it should mean is consultation between all the great self-governing nations of the Empire and Commonwealth during the period while policy is in formulation, and then, if agreement as to what that policy should be is achieved, full co-operation in its implementation. That is the objective for which we ought to be aiming.

I now turn to examine how far we have got along the road towards that goal. There are some people who believe we have been progressing so well that we are now getting very much more consultation; that we have devised a machine for effective and adequate Empire consultation and co-operation and that the machine is functioning effectively. Out of a long experience, now extending over some twenty-five years, during which I have been closely associated with this question of Empire and Commonwealth co-operation, I say that this is not so. We have not achieved that position. The past twenty-five years have been years of advance and progress. We have improved our methods of co-operation and consultation. But the stage which we have now reached leaves a great deal to be desired.

There is one possible exception to that somewhat general statement, and that is in respect of defence. Prior to the war we had an Imperial Committee of Defence—a very great conception for which, I think, the noble Lord, Lord Hankey, is entitled to the greatest measure of praise. That Committee did good work. On it sat the representatives of the Dominions. When war came, naturally, owing to the exigencies of the war, a really close military co-operation—in the widest sense of the word 'military'—was established and continued throughout hostilities. Up to October, 1945, when I ceased to be High Commissioner for Australia, I did everything in my power to ensure that that co-operation with regard to defence, established in war, would continue in peace. In the autumn of 1945, when I left, the plans were moving forward well, and my hope today is that what one anticipated was going to happen in 1945 has continued and has improved, and that we are really

getting full co-operation with regard to defence. Of that matter I have no knowledge, but I hope that His Majesty's Government during this discussion will give us some indication of the present position.

There are, however, many other vitally important subjects, apart from defence, on which we should have consultation and co-operation. As all noble Lords may not be completely familiar with the stage which we have now attained, I would like to indicate what is happening at the present time. What I have to say will, I think, be relatively up to date, though I cannot speak with any authority with regard to the last year or so. I can, however, speak with some authority as to what happened up to 1945. At the present time a vast mass of information is available to the Governments of the Dominions and an almost unlimited flow of cables—dealing mainly with international affairs—is going to the Dominions. There are also masses of despatches and cables passing to and from United Kingdom representatives abroad, all of which are available to the Dominions and their representatives. In addition there is a considerable flow of reports, despatches and other documents going out from the Commonwealth Relations Office—the Department which has now taken the place of the Dominions Office—to the Dominions. All the Dominions and the United Kingdom now exchange High Commissioners and the flow of information is increased thereby, the extent of the addition made by the High Commissioners depending almost entirely upon the personalities of the individual High Commissioners concerned.

But this is a point which has to be borne in mind. Nearly all the information is going from the United Kingdom to the Dominions. I would put the proportion as high as 90 per cent. All that information originates in the United Kingdom and goes out to the Dominions. The flow from the Dominions to the United Kingdom is very small and fragmentary, and the exchanges between the Dominions themselves are practically negligible. That is the broad position. But there is one matter which we have to recognize—namely, that practically all the information supplied is purely factual. I can say from bitter experience how impossible it is to get any official indication of policy—the United Kingdom's policy on any great question—during the formulative period when that policy is being created. It is only after it is finalized, agreed and almost unalterable that one can find out anything. Information which is of such a character that it does not give an opportunity for consultation and consideration during the period of the formulation of the policy is really of very little value.

I think we must all be agreed that it is essential that there should be that consultation. But would anyone suggest that early, adequate consultation takes place or is taking place on any of these subjects—the Peace Treaties, Palestine, the Marshall Plan, the financial and economic situation, overseas development and many other important problems? I venture to suggest to

your Lordships that that consultation is not taking place and has not been taking place. Yet it is imperative that it should do so.

The Lord Privy Seal (Viscount Addison): Would the noble Viscount mind giving me that list of subjects again.

Viscount Bruce of Melbourne: Certainly—the Peace Treaties, Palestine, the Marshall Plan, the financial and economic situation and overseas development. I want to make it clear that I am not suggesting that there has been no information given about most of these subjects. What I am saying is that there is no opportunity for real consultation with regard to them. I will indicate some small measure of consultation on some of them in a minute or so. What generally happens is that there is what I would describe as last-minute consultation, which generally means that after weeks—in one case which I have in mind, almost years—of consideration of policy, His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom suddenly reconcile their ideas and get agreement upon the matter. Then a cable is sent to the Dominions, or a meeting of Dominion representatives with United Kingdom representatives at an international conference is held, the decision is announced and probably action has to be taken the next day. I suggest that that is not very satisfactory, and I also suggest that a number of unfortunate situations have arisen as a consequence of it, but I do not think there is any point in dwelling on those things. It seems to me that what is needed to put the position right is some method by which we shall have consultation based on adequate information during the period of the formulation of a policy, so that if we are all agreed on that policy we can co-operate in implementing it; or, in certain cases, that those who are agreed can co-operate. But we must have the consultation while the policy is being formed.

In 1943, Mr. Curtin, the then Prime Minister of Australia, put forward certain proposals which, I suggest, would have met that requirement. I was very closely associated with Mr. Curtin in the formulation of these proposals, as was Mr. Shedden—who might be described as the Lord Hankey of Australia—in his old capacity as Secretary of the Cabinet, and of the Imperial War Committee of Australia. The proposals Mr. Curtin put forward were rejected, but I want to make it quite clear that while I propose to put in my own language the suggestions I wish to make, they do not differ in conception very greatly from what was put forward by Mr. Curtin in 1943. The suggestion I make is that we require a Council of British Nations—and I quite deliberately leave out any 'Imperial Council' or anything of that sort. In the evolution of this marvellous thing, the British Empire, we have reached the stage when what we really require is a Council of British Nations, a meeting of Governments which are self-governing inside the great British Commonwealth. That Council should be based on the Prime Ministers of the great self-governing parts of the Empire, and should be known as the Council of British Nations.

I also suggest that that Council must have a secretariat with picked personnel drawn from all over the different countries which are members of the Council. The tasks of that secretariat would be to keep all major questions under constant review, to furnish information and reports to all Governments who are members, and to prepare the documents and agendas for meetings of the Council. Meetings of the Council, in what I would call plenary session, with the Prime Ministers themselves, should be held as and when required. They would take the place of the old Imperial Conferences. In addition, I suggest that meetings of the Council to be known as special meetings could be held at any time to consider special questions as they arise—finance, transport, communications, or whatever the issue might be. A special meeting could be held in whatever part of the Empire was most convenient, but representation would probably be by the Ministers primarily concerned with the particular subject. The final thing needed is what I would call the ordinary meeting, which I suggest should be held in London once a month, under the presidency of the Prime Minister of this United Kingdom. In the ordinary way the representatives of the Dominions would be their High Commissioners, but no doubt from time to time the High Commissioners would be supplemented by Ministers who were over in this country on a special Mission. In addition, the secretariat could arrange for meetings of experts of the Empire on particular problems, and could also take over the responsibilities for arranging meetings held at the non-ministerial level. I understand that in the past two years, since I left—and they were being held before that—quite a number of meetings have been held at the non-ministerial level. Senior civil servants have met to discuss their special subjects, and I believe that very satisfactory results have accrued. But *ad hoc* meetings are not enough. Where they break down is that there is no follow-up for the individual meetings on special subjects. There must be some sort of secretariat to give continuity to the whole picture.

I have tried to put forward what I think are practical suggestions as to the method of consultation, but the thing I want to press—and to press as deeply as I can—is that we should also allow for flexibility in the method and extent of co-operation. We have to draw a clear distinction between consultation and co-operation, and we must have the maximum flexibility with regard to co-operation. There are such differing circumstances in the different Dominions. We have to recognize that in some cases we are going to get bilateral decisions. Do not get the idea that everybody is to be in on everything and that we are going to get complete agreement on every subject. We may have a bilateral decision or a multilateral decision—all that will work itself out in the process. I am trying to indicate the absolute necessity for action; but for Heaven's sake do not get the impression that I am suggesting we should now prepare a blueprint for a magnificent secretariat of the Empire or try to indicate a sealed pattern for consultation and co-operation. I am

doing nothing of the sort. I am trying to suggest that we recognize the necessity for action; we should then progressively try to create the machinery which will enable that action to be effective.

*The Right Hon. the Viscount Addison:*¹ I shall have a word to say later on what I think is rather a reactionary suggestion by the noble Viscount, Lord Bruce, because it does to some extent strait-jacket the arrangements, which I do not think would be altogether good. For all that, I am conscious—as is every one of your Lordships who has had anything to do with this business—that sometimes the method of consultation, or at all events of communicating information with a view to eliciting another opinion, is not perhaps as good as we should like it to be. I frankly recognize that sometimes, in practice, on these occasions we are impelled by the force of circumstances to which the noble Lord, Lord Hankey, referred, to take decisions at short notice. One cannot avoid it, though we do our best to give the fullest possible information; but it does happen sometimes unavoidably that one has to take a decision one way or the other before one has an opportunity of getting the responses as fully as could be wished. I am afraid that sometimes that is inevitable; but I think that we are gradually improving the machinery, and perhaps far more rapidly than the noble Viscount realizes.

I took down the list of instances which the noble Viscount mentioned. I am not saying that the machinery could not be improved, but I am just correcting him in something which he thought had not been dealt with. He thought that the machinery of consultation had not been adequate, and he mentioned certain cases. The first was the Peace Treaties which we hope will be completed one day. I have for very many hours, over several weeks, presided at meetings of Dominion representatives, where long beforehand we discussed the issues before going on to form a point of view. These were reported on regularly by the representatives from the Commonwealth, and I can assure the noble Viscount that even quite lately, in the case of the Commission that is now visiting the Italian colonies—which was appointed by the Deputies—the Dominions representatives have been informed and week by week their reactions solicited to the very difficult issues which arise. That is one good case. I assure the noble Viscount that they were fully consulted. I was one of those who did the consulting over a long period of time, and it is still going on. With regard to Palestine, the same thing applies. We are all painfully aware of the long period of difficulties over that issue, but I assure the noble Viscount that the opinions of the different Dominions have been taken into account on the great issues connected with that question time after time.

Another point was the financial and economic situation. It is a fact—although of course we do not advertise these things in the papers—that for a long time last year important representatives of the Commonwealth

¹ H. of L. Deb., vol. 153, col. 1154-8.

countries in London conferred on these anxious problems, and many of our Ministers went abroad to attend Conferences. Last year an exceptional number of Ministers of all the Commonwealth Governments were in London and conferred with us. As to the other point, connected with the Peace Treaties, I cannot refrain from referring to a Conference for which I myself had a large measure of responsibility—namely, the Conference at Canberra.¹ This was a new departure. I am sure the noble Viscount would and did welcome it. What were we discussing—for, of course, we were discussing, and were not 'lining up' against anybody? We discussed the issues that will arise in connexion with the Japanese Peace Treaty. There were many issues. All the Commonwealth countries were most strongly represented. Ministers of the highest rank were there from Canada, New Zealand and South Africa; in one case it was a Prime Minister. For the first time India and Pakistan were also represented—and I should like to pay a tribute to the character of the representatives whom they sent. I believe, if I may say so, that the proceedings of the Canberra Conference had a very valuable effect upon the representatives, both of India and Pakistan. It is difficult for me to imagine a more elaborate and complete system of consultation on the issues that will arise out of a Peace Treaty than that Conference presented. It does indicate a considerable advance.

There is another aspect of the economic question which perhaps I may mention. As your Lordships are aware, the Commonwealth countries are at this time making an exceptional effort to increase their production for the United Kingdom. It is a very exceptional effort. In some cases they are imposing upon themselves rationing of goods which they have in abundance, in order that they may send more to us. It is difficult to imagine a more eloquent and effective occasion of Empire solidarity than action of that kind, with New Zealanders daily depriving themselves of butter in order that we may have it; but that is what is happening. I should like to associate myself with what the noble Lord, Lord Milverton, said about the necessity of developing closer relations and a better scheme of development in many of our Colonial territories. As your Lordships well know, we are surveying, in common with Commonwealth countries, the possibility of developing even more our sources of food supplies in some parts of the Pacific and Africa. As a matter of fact, at this very moment our representatives from the Ministry of Food are in Australia, conferring with the Australians and getting their advice and help as to how we can make better progress with respect to some of these food production schemes.

I must say that I am a little timid, for the reasons that one noble Lord stated, about the idea of establishing a secretariat. All these things are going on, and I should not like a secretariat to insist on handling them all; I should begin to be rather afraid of the secretariat. Let me mention two or three

¹ An extract from the Report on the Conference is printed below, Vol. II, pp. 1168-71.

other things that went on last year. We had in London a Conference of all the Commonwealth countries which discussed for about six weeks the problems affecting common citizenship. Your Lordships will have before you soon a Bill which is the United Kingdom expression of the agreement arrived at at that Conference.

Viscount Samuel: The United Kingdom or Commonwealth expression?

Viscount Addison: The Bill will be the United Kingdom response. There will shortly be before this Parliament a Bill which will represent the United Kingdom expression of the agreement which was there arrived at, and there will also be Bills of the other Commonwealth partners.¹ I am only mentioning the fact that this Conference of high representatives from all the Commonwealth countries sat in London for several weeks. Almost whilst it was sitting, there was another Conference going on dealing with the problems that would arise over the tariff negotiations at Geneva. I am very glad to say that we tried, and with a very exceptional measure of success, to arrive at a common understanding of the point of view to be put forward at Geneva. After their return from Geneva, the whole body of experienced persons met again before they went further afield. I am not quite sure where their next port of call is.

Viscount Bruce: Havana.

Viscount Addison: We have so many of these International Conferences with queer initials that one is apt to become a little mixed. This is my point. There was this collection of Dominion representatives on quite different subjects assembled in London, more or less at the same time last year, with a body of Ministers coming and going. I am rather shy of arrangements of that kind being in the hands of some sort of secretariat. I confess that I am rather afraid that such a secretariat might follow the habit of other secretariats and attach to itself greater staffs and gradually assume greater authority. Anyhow, I do know this—and here I am speaking from first-hand knowledge—that an organization of that kind would not be acceptable, and would be strongly resented, in some countries of the Commonwealth for the very reason that I have indicated, that they would be apprehensive that an organization of that kind might not in the first place be sufficiently elastic or adaptable to take a share in all these different activities to which I have referred. It is only fair to say that. There is also the reason that it might get into the habit of wanting to exercise authorities which the Commonwealth countries would insist upon exercising through their own Governments. At all events, it would be looked upon shyly.

¹ See *Nationality and Citizenship Legislation*, Vol. II, Section XIX.