

Conference, has desired me to ask you to convey the following message to the Prime Minister of the Dominion of Canada :—

“ His Majesty’s Government have noted with much satisfaction the resolution passed by the House of Commons of the Dominion of Canada on March 29th on subject of national defence, regarding its approval of the speedy organization of a Canadian naval service in co-operation with, and in close relation to, the Imperial navy, and I understand that the Dominion Government proposes that its Defence Ministers should come here at an early date to confer with the Imperial Naval and Military Authorities upon technical matters arising upon that resolution.

“ His Majesty’s Government have also before them recent patriotic proposals made by Australia and New Zealand, demanding very cordial and careful consideration both as to principle and detail.

“ I desire, therefore, to commend to you the following important suggestion, namely, that a conference of Representatives of the self-governing Dominions, convened under the terms of Resolution I. of the Conference of 1907, which provides for such subsidiary Conferences should be held in London early in July next. The object of the Conference would be to discuss the general question of naval and military defence of the Empire, with special reference to the Canadian Resolution and to the proposals from New Zealand and Australia, to which I have referred.

“ The Conference would, of course, be of a purely consultative character; it would be held in private, and its deliberations would be assisted by the presence of members of the Committee of Imperial Defence or of other expert advisers of His Majesty’s Government.

“ I am addressing a similar message to the other Members of the Imperial Conference. I am intimating to the other Prime Ministers that I assume that as the consultation would be generally upon technical or quasi-technical naval and military matters, the other Dominions would elect to be represented, as in case of Canada, by their Ministers of Defence, or, failing them, by some other Member of the Government assisted by expert advice.”

I am strongly of opinion that an early confidential exchange of views between His Majesty’s Government and the Governments of His Majesty’s self-governing Dominions beyond the seas will be of the greatest mutual advantage, and I therefore trust that your Prime Minister and his colleagues will see their way to adopt the proposal.—CREWE.

No. 14.

AUSTRALIA.

THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL to THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

(Received 8.30 a.m., 1st May, 1909.)

TELEGRAM.

1st May. Confidential. The Government of Commonwealth suggests to His Majesty’s Government the desirableness of convening a conference of the self-governing Dominions at the earliest possible suitable date, to consider a definite line of co-operation for the naval defence of the Empire.—DUDLEY.

No. 15.

CANADA.

THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL to THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

(Received 2.30 a.m., 5th May, 1909.)

TELEGRAM.

[Answered by No. 20.]

Your telegram of 30th April.* Ministers wish to point out that views of Canadian House of Commons on the question of naval defence have already been

* No. 13.