

can be done for sterling. A rise in prices cannot be effected by monetary action alone, since various other factors which have combined to bring about the present depression must also be modified or removed before a remedy is assured. His Majesty's Government nevertheless recognize that an ample supply of short-term money at low rates may have a valuable influence, and they are confident that the efforts which have successfully brought about the present favourable monetary conditions can and will, unless unforeseen difficulties arise, be continued."

(d) The Conference recommends the other countries of the Commonwealth represented here to act in conformity with the line of policy as set out in the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, so far as lies within their power.

In the monetary sphere the primary line of action towards a rise in prices should be the creation and maintenance, within the limits of sound finance, of such conditions as will assist in the revival of enterprise and trade. Among these conditions are low rates of interest and an abundance of short-term money. While regard must be had to the different conditions applying to various types of loans, the rate of interest for all purposes should be kept as low as financial conditions permit. At the same time it is necessary that these favourable monetary conditions be achieved, not by the inflationary creation of additional means of payment to finance public expenditure, but by an orderly monetary policy, safeguarded if the necessity should arise, by such steps as will restrain and circumscribe the scope of violent speculative movements in commodities or securities.

It must be kept in mind, however, that the success of any such policy will be hampered and might be nullified by the failure to modify or remove important non-monetary obstacles. Of the non-monetary factors which are depressing the level of prices many are of international character and require an international remedy. The nations of the Commonwealth should, nevertheless, take all steps that lie in their power to increase public confidence, especially in the field of business enterprise, and to facilitate trade.

(e) The Conference recognizes the great importance to traders of stability of exchange rates over as wide an area as possible. The complete solution of this problem must await the restoration of conditions for the satisfactory working of an international standard as referred to below. In the meanwhile, and pending such a solution, this Conference has considered the possibility of achieving valuable results in two directions—first by creating an area of stability among countries regulating their currencies in relation to sterling; and secondly, by avoiding wide day-to-day fluctuations between sterling and gold.

As regards the latter, the Conference has noted with satisfaction that the United Kingdom has already established machinery aimed at preventing wide fluctuations in the gold value of sterling caused by speculative movements. As to the former, the Conference recognizes the value of the countries within the Commonwealth whose currencies are linked to sterling maintaining stability between their exchange rates and looks to a rise in the general level of wholesale prices as the most desirable means for facilitating this result.

II

The Conference recognizes that the ultimate aim of monetary policy should be the restoration of a satisfactory international monetary standard. Such a standard should so function as not merely to maintain stable exchange rates between all countries, but also to ensure the smooth and efficient working of the machinery of international trade and finance.

This postulates international agreement among the great trading nations of the world, and while certain of the States here represented hold very definite views on the question of the most desirable standard the Conference refrains from making any recommendations on the subject in view of the fact that the question is shortly to be discussed at an international conference. There are, however, several conditions precedent to the re-establishment of any international monetary standard. The most important among them are: a rise in the general level of commodity prices in the various countries to a height more in keeping with the level of costs, including the burden of debt and other fixed and semi-fixed charges; and an adjustment of the factors political, economic, financial and monetary, which have caused the breakdown of the gold standard in many countries, and which, if not adjusted, would inevitably lead to another breakdown of whatever international standard may be adopted.