

of other members of the British Commonwealth of Nations; and in giving that direct and immediate understanding of the national and personal factors in the situation which cannot well be obtained by correspondence or indirect communication. With this further knowledge in their possession, the representatives of each Government, in consultation with their colleagues and their respective Parliaments, are in the best of positions to formulate policies on questions where co-operation is required.

Doubt has often been expressed of the value of the conference method for dealing with international problems. It is true that to be of value there must be in the first place not only preliminary preparations, preliminary soundings, but an antecedent and substantial measure of readiness to work toward common ends. In conferences between the members of the British Commonwealth of Nations these preliminary conditions of success are fortunately fulfilled. There is, in our case, so wide a measure of common background and common interest, of identity in political traditions, and in the conceptions of the basis of an enduring world order that a common approach is readily found.

There is a second requirement for the success of a Conference. It is equally essential that there should be frank and explicit expression of the special difficulties, the individual requirements, of each country represented. Without such straightforward expression of the position of each Government no real progress can be made in meeting its difficulties and finding a basis for common effort. In the case of the members of the British Commonwealth this is no less essential. Each Dominion has a distinct geographical position, with all the consequences in differences of neighbours, differences in the nature of the international problems each has to face, differences of emphasis and preoccupation, that follow. Each has its special economic structure, its special racial background, its special constitutional and political problem. These differences must receive full consideration in any responsible and realistic expression of their policies.

There has been in the present Conference increasing recognition of these facts, and of the desirability of full statement of the views of the Government of each member. In the Imperial Conference we have enjoyed and exercised the family privilege of free and frank speech. This has contributed not only to a better understanding of the tasks and problems of the other members, but to the attainment of a sound and workable basis of co-operation. Each delegation, I believe, realizes more adequately the viewpoint of the others, each will be better able to take this into account in framing policies, each has learned much from the discussions, each is more fully aware of the fundamental sympathies and common aspirations that bind us together.

We have met at a time when events from week to week, sometimes from day to day, have brought vividly home to us the tension of the European situation, the difficulties that beset those who are striving to bring stability out of unrest and confidence out of fear. Fortunately, also, we have seen how patient and unremitting are the efforts to repair the torn fabric of European unity, how widespread is the desire and the determination to ensure peace, how deep the reluctance to incur the incalculable hazards of war. This experience, as well as the help we have gained from our discussions among ourselves, will, I am certain, encourage and enable each of us to strive more effectively for the rebuilding of international friendship, and, beneath diversity, to seek unity not only in our relations with other members of the Commonwealth, but in our relations with every other country that will work toward the same ends. We are confident that the goodwill that has been marked in our discussions will find opportunity for expression in other fields as well.

At this time of grave international unrest and anxiety we have sought, throughout to avoid, in phrase or gesture, anything which might add to existing difficulties. Indeed, we have reason to hope that the principles which we have reaffirmed and the views to which we have given expression may contribute not a little to a better understanding among all nations, and to a more fruitful collaboration between them. While, naturally, we have given careful study to problems affecting members of the Commonwealth, we have examined them not in any narrow spirit, but in the light of world need. Above everything, our discussions have disclosed how inseparable is the welfare of each member, and of the Commonwealth as a whole, from the peace and well-being of mankind.

I should not like the Conference to come to its close without conveying, on behalf of the members of the Canadian delegation, a word of grateful appreciation to His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom of the hospitality so generously extended in the course of our visit, a hospitality which has been extended not only to members of the delegation, but to the many Canadians who have journeyed to Britain in this Coronation year. A frequent visitor to these Islands over many years, I have never known a friendlier or more spontaneous reception to those who have come from overseas.

I should like particularly to speak of the exceptional quality of the work performed by the Conference Secretariat. We are much indebted to Sir Maurice Hankey, Sir Harry Batterbee, Sir Rupert Howorth, and to their United Kingdom and Dominion associates, for the efficiency and expedition with which they have carried out their all-important duties. The Imperial Conference, as it has developed, would, like Government itself, be impossible without the skill, the knowledge, and the devotion of the officials who serve it so faithfully.

In conclusion, may I say how great a pleasure it has been to my colleagues and myself to have participated, day by day, for over a month, in the proceedings of the Conference, with members of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, and with the representatives of His Majesty's Governments in Australia, New Zealand, and South