

Third Day.
18 April 1907.

FUTURE
CONSTITUTION
OF THE
CONFERENCE.
(Sir
Wilfrid Laurier.)

be under direct Ministerial responsibility of the Secretary of State for the Colonies. That is a very intelligible position. If you say under the direct responsibility of the Prime Minister, that is equally intelligible.

Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL: May I say that it seems both Dr. Jameson and Sir Wilfrid Laurier are agreed on the point that any secretariat established in this country between Conference and Conference should be under the authority of a responsible Minister of the British Government.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER: That is my view.

Dr. JAMESON: Yes, the Prime Minister.

Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL: The only question for the moment in doubt is whether it should be the Prime Minister or the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Dr. JAMESON: May I add, again, in connection with the secretariat, that it is the servant of this Conference, and should be under the control of the Prime Minister in his capacity as President of the Conference.

CHAIRMAN: I have consulted the Prime Minister, and the Prime Minister authorises me to say he does not see his way to agree to that arrangement.

Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL: From the point of view of the inner working of the office, there would be an almost insuperable difficulty in the classification of the different States and Dependencies of the Empire exclusively according to status. There must be a geographical classification as well, and it would involve a great duplication of machinery if separate machinery altogether were to be set up in the desire to place the secretariat entirely under the control of the Prime Minister.

Mr. DEAKIN: Duplication of interests I can quite understand. Mr. Churchill's point is incontestable on that, since, supposing Australia is communicating, no doubt questions affecting the Pacific would be raised, perhaps touching Fiji, which is a Crown Colony. In the same way when Sir Wilfrid Laurier's Government is concerned, there would be many problems relating to the West Indies, which he would probably consider the interests of Canada required should be very carefully considered. But the interests overlapping in that way would not, I think, really complicate or duplicate the work to any extent worth speaking of, because whatever questions are put forward would be as to the effect upon the self-governing Colonies of action which is taken in their neighbourhood, whether in regard to Crown Colonies or in regard to countries which are not Crown Colonies—perhaps countries under foreign flags, or under no flag. I do not see that there would be any duplication of work, though I fully admit the duplication of interests.

Mr. F. R. MOOR: I have nothing to say, except that I take it that the concluding portion of this paragraph is sufficiently wide to cover all information that may be of interest to all the various Colonies concerned, and that this information will be continuously supplied to these different countries in order that interests may be constantly kept alive in the various industries, that we are all concerned in. For instance it would cover all matters concerning commerce, shipping, and the various other large concerns that obtain throughout the Empire. If there is a continuous stream of