

that for discipline there should be a certain military code in operation in time of war. How you would deal with that is rather a question for you. One knows the delicate susceptibility of people about anything like military rules in time of peace, but probably you, with your Legislatures, can solve these problems quite as easily as we can.

Fourth Day.
20 April 1907.

MILITARY
DEFENCE.
(Mr. Haldane.)

I think I may conclude by making a suggestion of the extent to which we can go in this Conference in a practical direction, I mean so far as this particular Conference is concerned. The working out of details, as I have said, may well be done with Sir Neville Lyttelton and the General Staff at the War Office, and General Nicholson, the Quartermaster-General, is ready to assist in matters of administration and questions connected with it. But it does seem to me that it would be a great advance if we could agree upon a resolution in this Conference focussing the broad purpose. As I have said, we know that this thing must be founded simply upon the attaining of a common purpose, the fulfilment of a common end. It cannot be by the imposing of restrictions or by rigid plans which might not suit the idiosyncrasies of particular countries. I have drafted some words emphasising the question of the General Staff as the point, as the key to the attaining of the working-out of the common purpose, which does seem to me to be possible as a common basis without in the least interfering with individual liberty. The resolution I have drafted is before you. I would like to say that if it is agreeable to the Conference to adopt some such resolution as this, I should not desire that we should stop there, but I should suggest that you should send your experts over to the War Office to confer with our General Staff, and any other department, as to the way of making an immediate beginning in carrying out the broad principle which the resolution affirms.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN: My Lord, Mr. Haldane, and gentlemen, I am sure we have all been deeply interested in what we have heard from Mr. Haldane, and I may say in a general way that I am in very close sympathy with all he has said. There seems to be two ideas involved in the consideration of this matter. I will not say the chief, but certainly the first is the question of the defence of the different Dominions beyond the seas—I am not speaking now of these islands—particularly the defence of those Dominions against attack from without; secondly, as I understand Mr. Haldane, the agreement upon some method by which preparation might be made within those different Dominions for effective co-operation with the central forces of the Empire in the event of any severe strain or stress arising which would involve the integrity of the Empire. The first proposal is very easy, and I think, so far as most of the countries represented here are concerned, is being carried on to a greater or less extent. In Canada, without waiting to dwell in any detail upon what we have done, I think we have there made considerable progress within the last 10 years, and certainly very great progress since this Conference met five years ago. It should be pointed out at once, that so far as the Dominions beyond the seas are concerned, at any rate so far as Canada is concerned, we have no authority under our Militia Law to do anything beyond expend money and make preparations for the defence of Canada itself. We are absolutely limited in words to that. We cannot call our Militia out for active service for any purpose beyond the defence of Canada. Although Canada took part in the troubles in South Africa, it was done by a force which volunteered specially for the purpose and made a special contract for that purpose. I do not see very well how any responsibility could be undertaken to supply any force for any other purpose without an amendment in the law. Further,