

but exchange between the staffs of the different Colonies. I do not know whether that is desirable, but I do not like to lose sight of the idea that the different communities or dominions should have their own General Staffs.

CHAIRMAN : Might I suggest this? There is a general expression of opinion that it would be very desirable that the Secretary of State's statement should be made public, and I understand from him that there is no objection to that. In the statement, of course, is set forth in full what Sir Frederick Borden has been asking for and perhaps that would be the easiest way of doing it. There are one or two almost verbal amendments I think that have been suggested to me in the resolution itself, but otherwise it might stand. I think perhaps that the Conference might express approval of the Secretary of State's statement and then it might be recorded in the resolution and published.

Fourth Day.
20 April 1907.

MILITARY
DEFENCE.
(Sir Frederick
Borden.)

Mr. HALDANE : I think there is nothing in what I have said to-day that has not been said several times, not only in speeches, but in papers that have been published and are in the possession not only of the American General Staff but I suspect of all General Staffs. They are very well informed of each other's proceedings and there is no secret in what we have discussed to-day; it is a fixing rather of the ideas that have already been given expression to.

Mr. DEAKIN : It seemed to me a digest of the discussions which have so far proceeded in your Parliament and in your Press.

CHAIRMAN : You will revise it?

Mr. HALDANE : I will revise it, and I will take care that there is no expression that can possibly be open to objection.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN : The principle, I take it, is the establishment of an Imperial General Staff.

Mr. HALDANE : That is it.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN : We have no Imperial Army.

Mr. HALDANE : No, you have an Army which serves for the defence of the Empire, and you have the Committee of Imperial Defence.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN : I think we are all agreed that this should be done, but there may be some of our people, whom we represent, who may be somewhat sensitive about being committed, as they might think they were being committed, to something like an obligation.

Mr. HALDANE : You observe the General Staff is a purely advisory body, and indeed you have done it in Canada just now because you have a very distinguished General Staff officer, General Lake, who is your own Staff officer, as any General Staff officer sent under this scheme would be,—absolutely your own officer at your own disposition.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN : Precisely, but we have not said much about it.

Mr. HALDANE : No, your deeds have been better than your words. You have had General Lake for some time and have been working it up.