

Fifth Day.
23 April 1907.

MILITARY
DEFENCE.

Dr. SMARTT : No, but it would really appear from the Resolution that, so far as possible we were all desirous of immediate action and of this matter not being delayed.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN : But we recognise and affirm the need for developing. What more can we do beyond that ?

Sir JOSEPH WARD : So far as New Zealand is concerned, as soon as the Secretary of State for War communicates with us we will consider any proposals and deal with them.

Mr. HALDANE : By getting rid of the words "to immediate action" we have got rid of the suggestion that it is not to be immediate action.

Sir JOSEPH WARD : Quite so.

CHAIRMAN : Then the Resolution is to stand.

The Resolution, as amended, was carried unanimously.

Resolution III.,
p. v.

NAVAL DEFENCE.

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CHAIRMAN : Gentlemen, we now proceed to consider Naval Defence, and we have on the agenda two resolutions, one from the Commonwealth of Australia and one from New Zealand, and perhaps the most convenient course would be to proceed as we did the other day, that is to ask those who represent those two Colonies to first state their views. Will Mr. Deakin be ready to open it ?

Mr. DEAKIN : Before Lord Tweedmouth speaks !

Lord TWEEDMOUTH : Whichever you like.

Mr. DEAKIN : Perhaps you would wish to indicate generally the policy of the Admiralty. As I take it, this is not merely a discussion on naval Defence for New Zealand and Australia. Incidentally we have a special interest to consider, because we have an Act upon our Statute books, and the question of amending that Act by addition or variation is a subject which concerns us a great deal more than anybody else. But we have assembled first to take a general view of Naval Defence, and to be made acquainted with the policy of the British Government, presenting questions of great interest for the whole Conference. Incidentally one of these deals with the particular agreement relating to New Zealand and Australia. I do not know whether Sir Joseph Ward agrees.

Sir JOSEPH WARD : Yes, I agree; I think it would be most valuable to hear the opinions of Lord Tweedmouth.

Lord TWEEDMOUTH : Lord Elgin, and gentlemen, I feel it a high privilege to sit at this table to discuss this matter with the Prime Ministers