

CHAIRMAN: May I take it that this resolution is adopted?

The resolution was carried unanimously.

Fourteenth Day.
9 May 1907.

The Conference discussed the question of the publication of the Proceedings and decided that they should be published at as early a date as possible, subject to any necessary revision or omissions.

Resolution XIX.,
p. x.

NAVAL DEFENCE.

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Dr. SMARTT: Would I be in order in moving this Naval Resolution after the discussion yesterday? I do not think it will take any time because it is a resolution which requires no remarks to make it acceptable to the Conference: "That this Conference, recognising the vast importance of the services rendered by the Navy to the defence of the Empire and the protection of its trade, and the paramount importance of continuing to maintain the Navy in the highest possible state of efficiency, considers it to be the duty of the Dominions beyond the Seas to make such contribution towards the upkeep of the Navy as may be determined by their local legislatures—the contribution to take the form of a grant of money, the establishment of local Naval defence, or such other services, in such manner as may be decided upon after consultation with the Admiralty and as would best accord with their varying circumstances."

CHAIRMAN: I may say I communicated with the First Lord of the Admiralty what occurred, and he desires me to say he leaves himself entirely in the hands of the Conference with regard to any modification or omission of the words referring to the Admiralty. Otherwise he has no objection to it.

Dr. SMARTT: My reason for moving this resolution is the fact that I think we have all been impressed with the character of the discussion and the necessity of maintaining the Navy at the fullest possible strength, and I think we all recognise the manner in which the First Lord of the Admiralty has met us, especially in his desire to meet the views of the outlying portions of the Empire to see whether it is possible that they can assist in contributing to the strength of the Navy by organising local defences of a Naval character. I feel convinced that a policy of that sort will appeal very strongly to many portions of His Majesty's Dominions beyond the Seas. I gather from the statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty that the establishment of submarines, destroyers, Naval Reserve forces, local defences, and works of that character, will be of considerable advantage to the general strength of the Navy. I do not think anybody can take exception to the resolution, because it distinctly states that it is subject to the votes of the individual Legislatures, and that though the money will only be spent after consultation with the Admiralty, it does not in any way take away from the individual Colony its rights to be heard and practically to decide the best manner in which that money can be spent. But I gather from the character of the discussion we have had in this Conference, and the nature of the reception we have received—those of us who have had the advantage of discussing the matter with the First Lord of the Admiralty and his advisers—that the Admiralty will deal with the Colonies in the most sympathetic manner in this direction, the result being a movement that I consider will be of great advantage to the defence of the Empire. I think we all recognise that the time is coming when it is utterly impossible for the Colonies to expect Great Britain to bear practically the whole of this great burden of defence. The commerce of the Empire is now becoming of such an enormous character that it is more and more evident to the self-governing Dominions beyond the Seas of what vital importance it is to them, as well as to the heart of the Empire, that this commerce should have