

I speak for the youngest of the self-governing communities of the British Empire.

First, I wish to thank the Government of Canada for having extended to Southern Rhodesia an invitation to attend the Imperial Economic Conference, 1932, though the Colony has not yet attained to the position of a Dominion. I also thank the other Dominions for having approved of and agreed to the invitation; and the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for the Dominions for his good offices.

For over thirty years it has been the policy of Southern Rhodesia to grant tariff preferences to the United Kingdom and to Dominions which reciprocate. This policy was laid down by Cecil Rhodes, the founder of Rhodesia, in 1898. It is, therefore, in whole-hearted support of the extension of the policy of preferences, and of any other suitable methods which will assist in increasing trade within the Empire, that the representatives of Southern Rhodesia have come to this Conference.

The Colony is a producer of primary products, both mineral and agricultural, and stable markets for these are necessary to its progress. We have large areas of empty lands suitable for a variety of crops needed by the Mother Country, and to some extent by the Dominions and Crown Colonies. Southern Rhodesia also produces gold and base metals. Markets for these products will enable us to take settlers and to fill up our empty lands and thus to absorb some of the surplus population of the United Kingdom which must look overseas for its future.

The advantages are obvious on both sides. Something will have to be given up in return for advantages gained, and there must, therefore, be a spirit of give and take.

The nearer we get to the Conference, the more the difficulties before us can be seen and appreciated. But it is the genius of our people to overcome such difficulties.

I feel confident we shall not fail in our endeavours, and, with the encouragement of trade within the British Empire and the British Commonwealth of Nations, we shall strengthen existing bonds of sentiment and create new ties of self-interest and of sympathy.

**The Chairman:** Gentlemen, a reply has been received from His Gracious Majesty to the message dispatched to him this morning. It is as follows:—

“The Queen and I have received with sincere pleasure the message of good will and devotion sent to us by the representatives of the Governments of the British Commonwealth at the opening of the **Ottawa** Conference. Please convey to them our grateful thanks. I shall follow the course of your deliberations with the closest interest and with the confident hope that your labours will be crowned with success.

GEORGE R.I.”

At 1.35 the Conference adjourned to meet in the Railway Committee Room this afternoon.