

To-day all Empire countries and a number of foreign nations have emerged from the depression. The recovery of production and of internal markets is widespread, but has not, as yet, been reflected to a corresponding extent in world trade.

The first purpose of economic policy is to secure the welfare of the individual citizens of our respective countries.

In achieving this object Australia regards the development of secondary industries as highly important, and this fact is recognized in the framing of our trade policies.

Australia's future, however, is bound up with her primary industries, and the advancement of these industries makes vital the extension of our external trade.

This trade has been found to an important degree within the British Commonwealth, but almost every Empire country has become increasingly aware of the need for wider markets than even the Empire can supply. Hence, if we are able progressively to improve our standards of living, it is essential that there should be an increase in world trade.

Economic policy, however, also has profound effects upon the political relations of the countries of the world. To-day we are confronted by the picture of a world in which science has made possible standards of living for all countries far in advance of anything previously experienced, and yet in which poverty and unemployment have led to grave political discontents.

There is thus urgent need for wide policies of economic appeasement if our endeavours to bring about peaceful conditions in the world are to be successful.

For this purpose the revival of world trade is of first importance.

The Commonwealth Government, therefore, feel it essential that at this Conference we should undertake a general review of our trade relations. We believe that such a review will lead us to conclude that intra-Empire trade has been and will continue to be, of the utmost importance to each part of the Empire, but that the incidence of our trade agreements amongst the various members of the Empire requires careful re-examination.

It is also essential to examine how we can jointly and severally contribute to the great objective of a restoration of conditions in the world which will allow of a freer interchange of goods and services, so that every country may be able to improve the well-being of its population.

There is in the world to-day a stronger tendency towards economic co-operation than has been evident for a number of years, and the Commonwealth Government greatly welcomed the currency alignment agreements. We also feel a warm interest in the mission which the United Kingdom and the French Governments have entrusted to M. Van Zeeland.

It must be our task to see along what lines our national and Imperial economic policies can contribute to world prosperity. The paths toward these objectives can converge. Just as in the realm of foreign policy the group of nations which constitutes the British Empire must work for ideals embodied in the Covenant, so in economic policy we need to translate our strong existing co-operation among ourselves into policies which, while safeguarding our individual interests, will contribute to world prosperity and thus promote better relations both economically and politically between the nations of the world.

Australia would therefore urge that this Imperial Conference should give the closest attention to economic problems, since it is in this field that it may be found that positive results can be achieved in the near future.

CONCLUSION.

The agenda for the Conference embraces many other subjects. I feel, however, that the questions with which I have dealt so far transcend any other matters to which we will have to direct our attention that it is desirable that I should confine my remarks at this opening session to outlining the view of the Commonwealth upon them, and with those who have already spoken I express the hope that the greatest possible success will result from our deliberations.

STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER OF NEW ZEALAND.

The Right Hon. M. J. Savage: Mr. Prime Minister, I gratefully acknowledge your kind words, and warmly appreciate the whole-hearted welcome and hospitality which have been so generously extended to us and which have made us feel so completely at home in the Homeland.

This is my first visit to the United Kingdom and my first attendance at an Imperial Conference. I can assure you, Sir, that I fully appreciate the honour that has fallen to my lot of representing the Dominion of New Zealand at this Great Council of the British Commonwealth, and I fully realize the responsibility that devolves upon each and all of us.

I take this early opportunity of affirming, on behalf of the Government and people of New Zealand, our warm attachment to the people of this land, from which we have sprung, and our determination to do all that lies in our power to further the interests of that great association of free peoples to which we are privileged to belong.

I entirely endorse Mr. Baldwin's feeling reference to His late Majesty King George V. We have been proud to assist at the Coronation of Their Majesties King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, and we fervently trust that this reign will be long, happy, and prosperous.