

I believe the representatives of the British Government would be the first to acknowledge the advantages they have themselves derived from discussing with us foreign policy and their international obligations as well as from hearing the frankly expressed views which have been placed before them during this Conference by the representatives of the Dominions.

At the opening meeting at St. James's Palace I indicated that it was the hope of the Australian delegates that after we had all fully exchanged our views a statement would issue from this Conference which would demonstrate to the rest of the world that the British countries were prepared to act together in support of the principles and ideals for which the British Commonwealth of Nations stands, and for the maintenance of international law and order.

It is now my great pleasure to note that we have been able to follow such a course.

We from Australia feel that the statement on foreign affairs which has been issued with the endorsement of the representatives of all parts of the Empire assembled at the Conference should have a beneficial effect upon the international situation and constitute a real contribution towards the cause of world peace.

Before leaving this subject I desire to state how grateful we of the Australian delegation are for the sympathetic way in which other delegations have received our proposal regarding a pact of non-aggression for the countries of the Pacific. The cordiality of that reception has been echoed by the press and, we feel confident, by public opinion generally.

As with foreign affairs, so in regard to defence, the frank exchange of views which has taken place has been most advantageous to all parts of the Empire. Co-operation and conciliation in place of recourse to force in the settlement of international differences form the basis of the policies of all parts of the Empire. We all recognized, however, that until this could be ensured, and progressive disarmament brought about, it was essential for the well-being of the British Commonwealth and for the peace of the world that we should be strong enough to provide for the defence of the Empire and its vital interests and to meet our international obligations.

These objectives can best be achieved by consultations and co-operation; and the fullest examination of the possibilities in these directions was undertaken by the Conference.

The very full and frank statements made on behalf of the United Kingdom Government brought home, I think, to all the Dominions how resolutely it is facing the tragic task of rearmament, and how grievous is the burden imposed upon the people of Great Britain by the necessity to provide adequate defence.

On behalf of Australia I express our deep appreciation of what Great Britain is doing and our recognition of how greatly her action is contributing to the safety and security of the Dominions and the peace of the world. In the past Australia has shown her appreciation of the obligation which rests upon her to provide to the maximum of her capacity for her own defence. That obligation, as a proud sovereign people we will continue to bear while recognizing that our ultimate safety depends upon our membership of the British Empire.

As in the case of the statement on foreign affairs, the Australian delegation feels that the statement on defence, which has issued with the endorsement of all the representatives of the Dominions assembled at this Conference, will contribute to the appeasement of the international situation and the cause of peace.

There is no need for me at this stage to refer in detail to the other matters discussed at the Conference. The results of our deliberations with regard to them are embodied in the summary of the proceedings of the Conference, which I understand will be issued immediately. Many subjects were dealt with in committees where a great deal of valuable work was done and a unique opportunity afforded for the exchange of views on questions affecting the well-being of the Empire. Invaluable assistance was rendered to these committees by sub-committees of experts. I should like to pay a tribute to the valuable work done by these committees. That these small groups of experts have been able to cover so much ground in so brief a period is, I think, a splendid achievement.

I should like also to thank the Secretary-General of the Conference, his associates of the Secretariat, and other officers of the Conference for the courteous and able manner in which they have performed their heavy duties. We owe a debt of gratitude to them for all they have done. Finally, I would like to express the sincere thanks of the Australian delegation to the British Government and the people of Great Britain for the cordiality and kindness of their welcome and for the hospitality so warmly extended to us everywhere during our visit to the Mother-country.

STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER OF NEW ZEALAND.

The Right Hon. M. J. Savage: On behalf of the New Zealand delegation I have to thank the British Government, and the people whom we have been privileged to meet for their generous hospitality and courtesy during our stay in England. We are grateful to