

“Government” (I like this expression) “and the Governments of the self-governing Colonies. The Prime Minister of the United Kingdom will “be *ex officio* President,” and I would suggest, not with a view to framing the resolution to-day, for consideration the point which we have pressed on the Colonial Office, but which they could not accede to at this Conference, so as to obviate the difficulty put before us in a very strong way by Sir William Lyne. I feel, and Mr. Deakin must feel also, the advantage of having the benefit of colleagues here who are to discuss the questions affecting navigation and affecting war. I miss, as I said before, the presence of my colleague the Minister of Finance, but I do not like to bring these colleagues of mine to London simply to be silent and to speak when called upon.

Third Day.
18 April 1907.
—
FUTURE
CONSTITUTION
OF THE
CONFERENCE.
(Sir
Wilfrid Laurier.)

Dr. JAMESON : I think Mr. Deakin is not quite correct in saying that we consented at this Conference that colleagues should only deal with matters affecting their own Departments.

Mr. DEAKIN : That is subject to what Lord Elgin has already said. Lord Elgin has already pointed out that any one Minister can speak with his chief.

Dr. JAMESON : That would limit it very much as we might want to bring in the Minister of Defence. I have not been able to bring the Minister of Defence and I have brought the one who knows most about matters outside that Department.

CHAIRMAN : For the advice which the Prime Minister wishes he must make the selection.

Sir JOSEPH WARD : Lord Elgin, I should like to say that personally I am desirous of seeing this Conference reasonably widened, but I think we want to look at the matter dispassionately and to approach this subject a little more cautiously. Taking the proposal of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, whose Ministers I think ought to be here and upon matters appertaining to their Departments should take the place of the Prime Minister in discussing them, that I agree with entirely; but if we are to have the principle established of up to three Ministers coming from the self-governing Colonies, each taking part in all debates, then obviously you place the far distant countries at a complete disadvantage. In the case of New Zealand it would be impossible for three responsible Ministers to leave our country for the time we have to in order to attend this Conference; and if we want to have anything like uniformity of procedure, then I think the original idea suggested as the outcome of the former discussion that the colleagues of the Prime Minister who are here should undeniably have the right to take part in discussing all matters affecting their respective Departments, is a right one; but personally, I would ask for very careful consideration before we affirm the general principle for the future government of the Conferences of having up to three Ministers coming here and taking part in all discussions.

Dr. JAMESON : But not in voting; it is one vote. We want the best information we can get from any Minister.

Sir JOSEPH WARD : Yes, I concur that one vote is right, but I can only say that in the case of New Zealand—and I am quite prepared to subordinate my own views upon this matter to the general interests of the Conference—undeniably we would be here with in all probability one representative at the future Conferences and that one representative would have