

to 31st March, 1943, foresee that the work at present in view would make it desirable to increase the fund to £22,000 a year. The committee recommended that this increase over the five-year period should be approved.

On the committee's recommendation, the Conference adopted the following resolution:—

- “ The Conference desires to place on record its warm appreciation of the valuable work done by the Members and Staff of the Imperial Economic Committee since the last Imperial Conference:
- “ The Conference is glad to note the success which has attended the operations of the committee on the basis of the complete constitutional equality of the participating Governments:
- “ The Conference approves the continuance of the Imperial Economic Committee as at present constituted and would welcome a representative of Burma on the committee:
- “ The Conference approves generally the proposals for the finance of the Imperial Economic Committee set out in the financial statement and forecast prepared by the committee in May, 1937, in respect of the five-year period from the 1st April, 1938, to the 31st March, 1943, and in particular approves that the annual fund of the committee, over this period, to which the several Governments subscribe, should be £22,000.
- “ The Conference approves the continuance of the scale of contributions recommended by the Imperial Committee on Economic Consultation and Co-operation, 1933, and at present in force, subject to any adjustment which may be agreed between India and Burma in the event of Burma desiring representation on the committee.”

(ii) PROPOSAL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN EMPIRE AGRICULTURAL COUNCIL.

The proposal by His Majesty's Government in the Commonwealth of Australia for the establishment of an Empire Agricultural Council was considered and fully discussed. The representatives of the Commonwealth explained that the proposed Council would consist of the Ministers concerned with agriculture in the Governments represented at the Imperial Conference. It would meet as opportunity afforded or occasion required between Imperial Conferences and would be designed to provide more frequent opportunities for joint examination of agricultural questions than are at present afforded by Imperial Conferences and occasional meetings between Ministers. When Ministers could not attend they could be represented by High Commissioners. The Council would be purely advisory and would not require any elaborate organization of a permanent kind.

It was agreed that the Governments of the Empire should aim at the greatest possible measure of co-operation in the examination of problems of common concern. Doubt was expressed, however, by certain representatives whether many of the problems were of a kind which could be best dealt with by an organization such as that proposed. Furthermore, before deciding to set up any new advisory or consultative body, it should be clear that it would not duplicate work which is within the scope of the already existing Inter-Imperial agencies. The constitution of the Imperial Economic Committee, whose terms of reference have been revised by the resolutions of successive Imperial Conferences, seemed, it was considered, to be well qualified to meet most of the functions proposed for the Agricultural Council. Moreover, co-operation in the interchange of information concerning agricultural research is provided by the Imperial Agricultural Bureaux.

The opinion was also expressed that where the need arose for a common consideration of subjects of importance to different Empire countries, which could not be met by existing agencies, the best course would be to appoint *ad hoc* bodies for the purpose.

For these reasons, the committee, while appreciating the motives which inspired the Australian proposal, considered that the establishment of an Empire Agricultural Council is not called for, and recommended accordingly.

The Conference took note of this conclusion.