

FEDERATION OF MALAYA CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE

OPENING SESSION AT LANCASTER HOUSE

The Federation of Malaya Constitutional Conference, which will discuss the future relations between Her Majesty's Government, and Their Highnesses the Rulers and the Government of the Federation, opened at Lancaster House, London, S.W.1. at 10.30 a.m., today, Wednesday, January 18, 1956.

The Conference is attended by four representatives of Their Highnesses and four of the Federal Ministers, one of whom is the Chief Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman. The Rulers are represented by:-

Enche Abdul Aziz bin^x Haji Abdul Majid, Mentri Besar
("Chief Executive Officer") of Selangor;

Dato Panglima Bukit Gantang, Tuan Haji Abdul Wahab bin

Toh Muda Abdul Aziz, Mentri Besar of Perak;

Dato Nik Ahmed Kamil bin Haji Mahmood, D.K., S.P.M.K.,

P.Y.G.P., C.B.E., formerly Member for Local Government, Housing and Town Planning; and

Dato Mohamed Seth bin Mohamed Sa'aid, S.P.M.J., P.I.S.,

Deputy Mentri Besar of Johore.

The Alliance is represented by:-

Yang Teramat Mulia Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra, Chief Minister and Minister for Home Affairs;

Colonel H. S. Lee, C.B.E., J.P., Minister for Transport;

Dr. Ismail bin Dato Abdul Rahman, Minister for Natural Resources; and

Dato Abdul Razak bin Dato Hussein, Minister for Education.

Enche Abdul Kadir is Secretary to the Rulers' representatives, and

Mr. T. H. Tan is Secretary to the Alliance representatives.

Lord Ogmore is acting as Legal Adviser to the Federation Delegation.

The High Commissioner for the Federation of Malaya, Sir Donald MacGillivray, K.C.M.G., M.B.E., is also attending the Conference, together with the following senior members of his staff:-

Sir David Watherston, K.B.E., C.M.G., Chief Secretary of the Federation;

Mr. M. J. P. Hogan, C.M.G., Q.C., now Chief Justice of Hong Kong who until October 1955 was Attorney-General of the Federation; and

Mr. O. A. Spencer, Minister for Economic Affairs.

The Chair at the Conference is being taken by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Mr. Alan Lennox-Boyd. Representatives of the Treasury, the Ministry of Defence and other interested Departments will attend the talks in addition to members of the Colonial Office.

In July 1955 Federal elections were held for the first time in the Federation of Malaya, and a new Executive Council was formed from members of the Alliance, which at the July elections, won 51 out of the 52 elected seats in the Federal Legislative Council. When the Secretary of State for the Colonies visited the Federation of Malaya in August 1955 he held discussions with Their Highnesses the Rulers and with the new Alliance Ministers, on the next steps to be taken in the direction of self-government for the Federation. /As a result ...

^x "bin" = "son of".

As a result of these discussions it was agreed that a Conference should be held in London early in 1956 to discuss the future relations which should exist between Her Majesty's Government, Their Highnesses the Rulers and the Government of the Federation. It has also been agreed in principle that a Commission should be appointed to review the constitution in the Federation, and it is intended that the terms of reference, composition and timetable of this Commission should be discussed at the Conference.

In his speech of welcome to the Delegations, at the public opening of the Conference, the Secretary of State for the Colonies said:-

"I am very glad to welcome today on behalf of Her Majesty's Government representatives of their Highnesses the Rulers of the Malay States, the Chief Minister of the Federation and the other Alliance Ministers. You come, Gentlemen, to London almost exactly eight years after the Federation Agreement was signed. Though I would not claim as of quite the same historical importance, you come also four to five months after my wife and I returned from the Federation, fortified by the hospitality and the friendship which we were shown.

"We are all, I know, also glad to see here His Excellency the High Commissioner and some of his senior advisers. I know you will want me to congratulate Sir David Watherston, Chief Secretary of the Federation, on the honour done him by Her Majesty: and Mr. Hogan, whose appointment as Chief Justice to Hong Kong was greatly welcomed there, and is, I recognise, a heavy loss to the Federation.

"We are meeting to consider certain fundamental matters concerning Malaya: and also, of course, the constitutional development of the Federation. Most of us are old friends and I feel sure that these talks which we are officially about to begin will still further strengthen the ties that bind us together within the British Commonwealth".

In its first Plenary Session, which followed immediately upon the public opening, the Conference began its work with an address by the Secretary of State. In it he outlined the history of political development in the Federation of Malaya since the Federation Agreement was signed in 1948, and described how the Conference came to be convened. He then went on to refer broadly to the main questions before the Conference - finance, defence and internal security, the future of the Public Service and the proposed Commission to review the constitution of the Federation.

The Chief Minister of the Federation, Tunku Abdul Rahman, and Dato Panglima Bukit Gantang, one of the Rulers' representatives, and other members of the Malayan Delegation also spoke. The Chief Minister gave the Secretary of State a statement of the views of the Delegation as a whole, with a view to its being studied, and considered at a later Plenary Session.

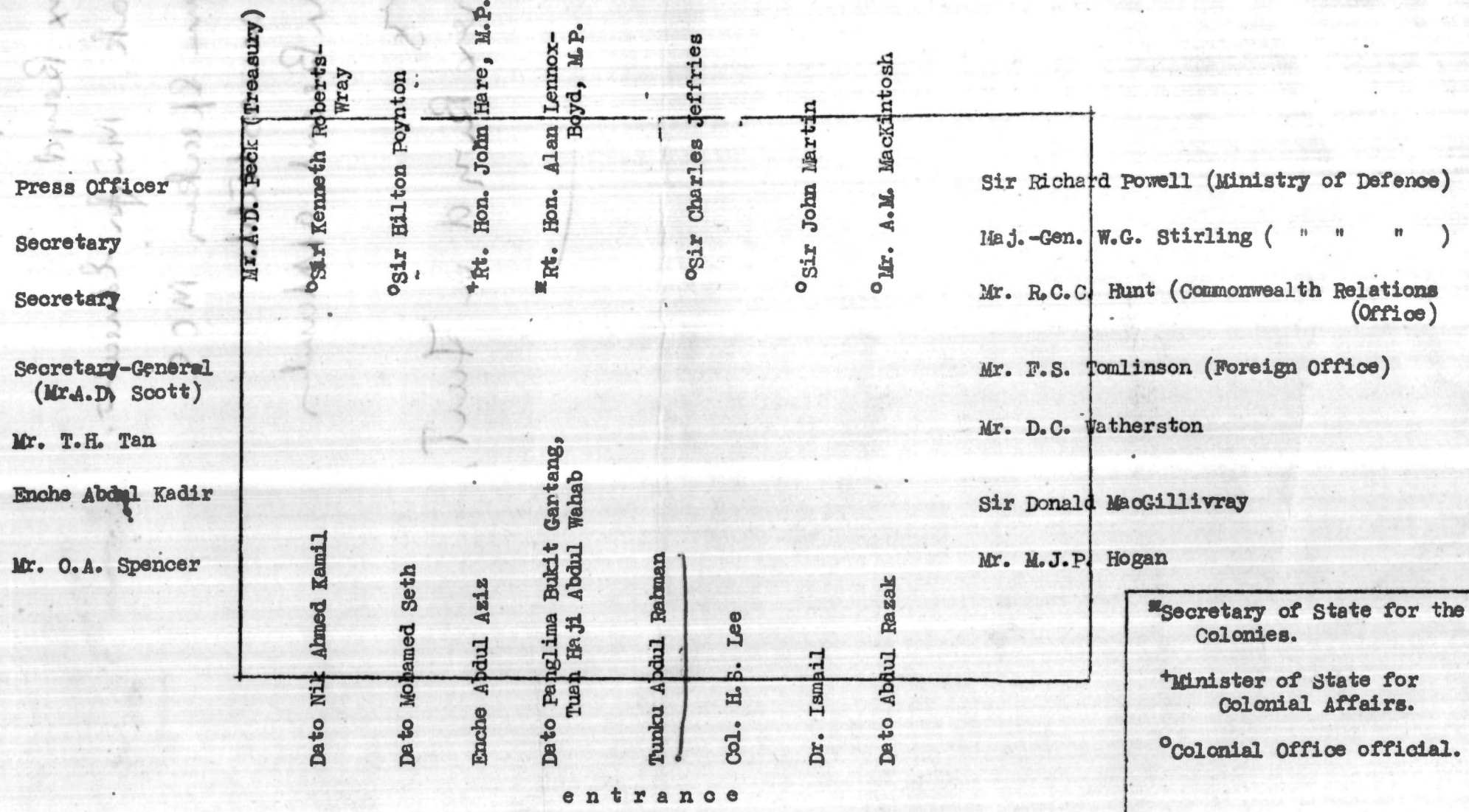
The Conference then considered the details of its future procedure and agreed upon the establishment of a number of committees, including a Steering Committee which would as necessary make recommendations to the Conference on the conduct of its work.

Finally, the Conference agreed to adjourn for the day, and to meet again next morning.

FEDERATION OF MALAYA CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE

SEATING PLAN

windows



^oSecretary of State for the Colonies.
[†]Minister of State for Colonial Affairs.
^oColonial Office official.

stage
 Mr. O.A. Spencer
 Enche Abdul Kadir
 Mr. T.H. Tan
 Secretary-General (Mr A.D. Scott)
 Secretary
 Secretary
 Press Officer

Mr. A.D. Peck (Treasury)

Dato Nik Ahmed Kamil

Dato Mohamed Seth

Enche Abdul Aziz

Dato Panglima Bukit Gantang,
Tuan Haji Abdul Wahab

Tunku Abdul Rahman

Col. H.B. Lee

Dr. Ismail

Dato Abdul Razak

Sir Kenneth Roberts-Wray

Sir Hilton Poynton

Rt. Hon. John Hare, M.P.

Rt. Hon. Alan Lennox-Boyd, M.P.

Sir Charles Jeffries

Sir John Martin

Mr. A.M. MacKintosh

Sir Richard Powell (Ministry of Defence)
 Maj.-Gen. W.G. Stirling (" " ")
 Mr. R.C.C. Hunt (Commonwealth Relations Office)
 Mr. F.S. Tomlinson (Foreign Office)
 Mr. D.C. Watherston
 Sir Donald MacGillivray
 Mr. M.J.P. Hogan