

dividing us that, if we were ready to speak to each other as he did tonight, it would take us a very long way. Further, I want to say that it seemed to me he was dealing with the really basic and moral questions which affect this matter.

I wish I could say the same about the speeches of the two ministers to which we listened today. As far as the Secretary of State for External Affairs was concerned, perhaps it was inevitable that he should deal almost entirely with what I believe the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Claxton) called procedural machinery. Those are long, ugly words which describe things I find extremely uninteresting, but I suppose we have to talk about them. I was sorry the minister had to spend his whole time on them, but perhaps it was unavoidable.

As far as the Minister of National Defence was concerned, I was certainly disappointed in his speech, because he spent forty minutes in telling us, first of all, that we had a good record in the war, with which I fully agree; then that we had good representatives at the various conferences, with which I am sure the hon. member for Peel (Mr. Graydon) and the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggart (Mr. Coldwell) agree; and then he went on to praise us generally as a nation, with which I am sure we all agree. But it seemed to me that he spent no time whatever and the Secretary of State for External Affairs had no time to spend, on the important questions raised by the hon. member for Peel and the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggart, which have to do with the economical and moral background of this whole matter. I consider it a great pity that this should be so; but though this debate is ending now, I suppose, I hope occasion will be taken later on to deal with these questions.

I should like to refer to a remark made by the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggart, with which I believe we all agree; that is, that none of these procedural questions, none of these questions of status, which are important and on which I think also we all agree, are of any value whatever and none will have any importance unless the basic economic questions can be solved. The two hon. members to whom I have referred asked some searching questions.

I shall refer to one only, because time is short. The hon. member for Rosetown-Biggart pointed out the great economic question which faces us in connection with the great German manufacturing establishments, the great trusts of Germany. He asked what was to be done about them. If I remember aright, he said he understood it to be the fact

[Mr. Macdonnell.]

that the Canadian and American view was that we were to try to work that out through private enterprise; on the other hand, the British view was that it should be worked out through the mechanism of socialism. That is an important question. The hon. member and I would not want the same answer, perhaps, but I think we are both entitled to an answer. It is extremely unfortunate there was no time for it; perhaps time will be found later for a discussion of that important question.

Before I take my seat, I should like to refer to just one other matter. We heard a great deal of discussion about the matter of status. I do not think there is any difference in this house on that question. Recently I have been reading the memoirs of Sir Robert Borden. Anyone who goes back and reads what happened when he and his colleagues were in Britain in the winter of 1918-19 will find that, if ever there was a man who was firm and determined about the status of this country, and who would have no fooling about it, it was Sir Robert Borden. I should add that certain additions were made in 1926, but I believe anyone who reads the whole record will understand that the basic decisions were made in 1919. I raise that point, not because I am particularly interested in adjudging credit or discredit, but for the following reason.

There was only one reason Sir Robert Borden was able to do such good work at that time, and that is that he was on the spot. He was able to take a firm position with other people in authority, and to press the matter after having taken a position. He never could have done that if he had been in Ottawa sending cables and reports to London. Anyone who reads the record will realize it was only his prestige and his ability to go and to take instant action which won these concessions, which are so important to us all.

Now we have today very difficult questions of status. I know—and if I did not, the Secretary of State for External Affairs would inform me—that the new situation is different, indeed. Sir Robert Borden was in London because he was invited to be there; there was no question about that. We realize that at the present time the situation is vastly different. Nevertheless I express great regret that it is not possible for the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) or the Secretary of State for External Affairs, or both of them to be in London at this time. The minister may give cogent reasons against it. I realize that this condition has arisen in an entirely different way from the condition of 1919. Nevertheless I believe it is most unfortunate that we have