

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: Very good. That is a matter of fact.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: The despatch was sent by Lloyd George and Winston Churchill without the knowledge of the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: Now we are getting into the domestic affairs of the British Government. But it is not a fact that it was sent without the authority of the Government. This is shown definitely by the correspondence published by Winston Churchill, which I have read. It was sent by the Government, whether they should have sent it or not. It was nothing in the nature of a command to Canada; it was a mere inquiry as to our attitude in respect of a treaty in which it was assumed we had an interest because we had signed it.

Now, I say in respect of a treaty of that kind, which we have executed as an autonomous nation of the Empire, it is the duty of Canada to make a reply such as I have indicated. But if the honourable gentleman is afraid of those words, if those words carry to him something so Imperial that his eye cannot look upon them, I will tell him who originated them in my mind; who first used them in my hearing; who used them with my full approval. That gentleman was Sir Wilfrid Laurier. Sir Wilfrid Laurier used those words with a vastly wider application than I did when I used them in relation to British support. I refer my honourable friend to the speech Sir Wilfrid made in the House of Commons, and which is reported in Hansard. The honourable gentleman will find the words used with a much wider import than I used them, but I have not heard him cite them in condemnation of Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

Then the honourable gentleman comes to another speech, one which I made at Hamilton about three years later. I have already sought to expound to the people of this country the reasons which actuated me then, and what I had in mind. The honourable gentleman has read correctly what I said. He has read sufficient. No more is necessary. He did not suppress anything. What I had in mind was the doing of something to prevent the disunity of this country if the dread hour should strike again.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: Well, I agree with my honourable friend.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: Very good. But wherein was there any inconsistency with anything I had done before or have done since? It is tremendously important that in whatever struggle we may have to face in the

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years to follow we do not get into any racial quarrel in Canada; that we seek to get the utmost measure of unity from the very moment we enter a conflict. That is something which is worth considerable sacrifice to-day and was worth the same then. It would have been worth sacrificing something even in the last conflict. We are able to see now that through three years of the late conflict we played our part without the expressed authority of the people of Canada for what we were doing. We did so right up to 1917, when we got the authority. If we had obtained it at first there would have been a greater measure of unity throughout than was actually witnessed.

An Hon. SENATOR: Hear, hear.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: Consequently it seems to me I was enunciating a course that could be followed to gather together the greatest measure of unity—you never can get it complete—to marshal the greatest measure of unity of which this country is capable. That was all I had in mind, and I thought I made that clear. Certainly I did in a further exposition about ten or twelve years later.

I said nothing in the nature of advocating a referendum. That is not the British system. It is not the sound system. Democracy will not work under referendums. I hope I shall not be guilty of exaggeration if I express the fear that if you submitted to the people a referendum as to whether you should repudiate the national debt it might carry. What is my honourable friend's guess?

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I would not be a party to submitting any immoral policy.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: Is that any more a moral issue than the question of what we should do in a matter of life and death? No, I would not submit to any referendum. I said I would ask the Government to go to the country at once, and if I were the head I would support in the election every member of the House, no matter what side he was on, who supported the Government in the decision they were taking to participate in the war.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: You would divide the country in twain.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: But my honourable friend says there can never again be a conflict in which we can take part. Does he? Take care!

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: According to my right honourable friend, without submitting it to the people.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: That is what I said. Very good. But the honourable gentleman says that as soon as it is submitted it will split the country in twain.