

We go back to the Durham report for the assistance it afforded us in achieving responsible government and because of that assistance, I suppose, we must not be too critical about many of the other things we find in that report.

It has been said that our Constitution is made up in part of Statutes and in part of Conventions, created by precedents. We got our present form of government from and through the precedent created in 1848 which recognized in the Canadian people their birth-right of freedom and responsibility. Co-operation of the two races in the honourable task of self-government necessarily followed.

A few years later, the Duke of Newcastle, as Secretary of State for Colonial Affairs, attempted to lecture the Canadian Government and the Canadian Legislature on the wisdom of certain protective duties imposed by a Canadian Statute.

Sir Robert Borden, in his "Canada and the Commonwealth", speaks of the reply made to this dispatch in the following terms:

"Courteously but very firmly, the Canadian Ministry denied responsibility except to the Provincial Parliament alone by whose confidence they administered the affairs of the country".

The report constitutes a landmark in constitutional history. Its most famous sentence affirmed a position that remained unchallenged.

"Self-government would be utterly annihilated if the views of the Imperial Government were to be preferred to those of the people of Canada. It is therefore the duty of the present Government distinctly to affirm the right of the Canadian Legislature to adjust the taxation of the people in the way they deem best, even if it should unfortunately happen to meet the disapproval of the Imperial Ministry."

Self-government in domestic affairs naturally brought about self-government and self-determination with respect to our relations with other states and other powers.

Because of our history, our geography, our climate, the kind of natural resources of our country, our development as a people and the development of our economy, we have had to take our place in the family of nations and two world wars in our own generation have conclusively shown that when the world is at war, we are inevitably involved and have to take a costly and important part in the winning of victory for the nations which, like ourselves, believe in freedom and in democratic institutions.

It is not strange, therefore that when, even before the end of the last war, the call went out for a conference to attempt to set up a democratic union of the freedom-loving people, we chose to be present and became one of the United Nations.

Not only did we look upon the Charter proposed at San Francisco as a solemn treaty renouncing war as an instrument for the settlement of international disputes, but we hoped it would become the corner-stone of the extension of democratic processes in the domain of international affairs.

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