

Ministers of the overseas Dominions to the Imperial War Cabinet. We meet there on terms of perfect equality. We meet there as Prime Ministers of self-governing nations.<sup>8</sup> We meet there under the leadership and the presidency of the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. After all, my Lord Chancellor and Gentlemen, the British Empire as it is at present constituted is a very modern organization. It is perfectly true that it is built up on the development of centuries, but as it is constituted today both in territory and in organization it is a relatively modern affair. Why, it is only 75 years since responsible government was granted to Canada. It is only little more than fifty years since the first experiment in Federal Government—in a Federal Constitution—was undertaken in this Empire. And from that we went on, in 1871, to representation in negotiating our Commercial Treaties, in 1878 to complete fiscal autonomy and after that to complete fiscal control and the negotiation of our own treaties. But we have always lacked the full status of nationhood because you exercised here a so-called trusteeship, under which you undertook to deal with foreign relations on our behalf, and sometimes without consulting us very much. Well, that day has gone by. We come here as we came last year, to deal with all these matters upon terms of perfect equality with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and his Colleagues. It has been said that the term Imperial War Cabinet is a misnomer. The word "Cabinet" is unknown to the law. The meaning of "Cabinet" has developed from time to time. I see no incongruity whatever in applying the term "Cabinet" to the Association of Prime Ministers and other ministers who meet around a common council board to debate and to determine the various needs of the Empire. If I should attempt to describe it, I should say it is a Cabinet of Governments. Every Prime Minister who sits around that board is responsible to his own Parlia-

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(8) Within this week I have heard these words read with perfect acceptance and approval by a prominent member of His Majesty's Privy Council at Westminster, Viscount Cave, formerly Solicitor General and Home Secretary, addressing the Empire Club of Canada, at Toronto, September 27, 1920.