

that has not yet been adequately recognized. The development is inevitable and right (I heard your chief, A.J.B., describe it the other day as 'inevitable and therefore right'); it cannot be wrong or objectionable to recognize it. That much is certain and that far, surely, we can step. It will not do to hesitate because of some apprehension that some objectionable step must inevitably follow. Wrong steps do not inevitably follow right steps.

"To be frank, I do not quite understand what you mean by suggesting that a Dominion envoy 'would claim the right to go to the Government to which he was accredited and to urge upon that Government the views of his Dominion with the whole force of his status as a representative of the British Empire as a whole'. I know of nothing in past experience to justify this apprehension, and I cannot imagine a Canadian posing as anything but a Canadian for the purpose of pressing the views of the Canadian Government. Many Canadians would indeed feel that they might be even more effective by confining themselves rigidly to that role. I quite understand that there may be some far reaching implications in this last, and I do not press them or 'face' them just now because it is not necessary to do so. There will be time enough for that when it really is necessary.

"Nor do I quite understand your last paragraph. It would indicate that you really believe that H.M.G. might be prepared to talk to the Dominions in terms of ultimata. That is something new, and personally I should be glad to know if there is anything in it."

Second Percy Letter

To which Percy replied on February 19 :

"My dear Loring,

Many thanks for yours of yesterday. Please do not take anything that I say to you as representing anything but my own views. I do not believe that H.M.G. are at all prepared to 'talk to the Dominions in terms of ultimata', or that persons in authority regard the subject we have been discussing as 'explosive'. I have little doubt that anything Sir Robert Borden proposes will be accepted in a vague and easy-going spirit by our people. That is just the trouble. The authorities always politely ignore the fact that there is a choice before the British Commonwealth. I only wrote my letter to you because I think it is for people like you and me, who know that there is a choice before the British Commonwealth, not to disguise from ourselves the direction in which we are going.

"If you look in my letter, you will see that I said there that I did not anticipate the difficulties I foresaw would come from Canada. But Canada is not the only Dominion, and you know the tendencies of Australia as well as I do.

"I had thought that the object of putting a new label on to H.B.M. ambassadors and calling them High Commissioners was to enable us to give a name to the Dominions representatives which, while marking their 'assistant' capacity would be more dignified than the name 'counsellor'. If you do not want to give them this assistant status, then there is no object in changing the title of H.B.M.