

Independence or Imperial Partnership?

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"There must be a change"

"After this war the relations between the Dominions and the Mother Country can never be the same again." This was written by Mr. BONAR LAW, in December 1915.¹ In September last, the Colonial Secretary gave expression to the same thought: "So far as the Dominions are concerned," he said, "this war is being carried on under conditions which never existed in the world before, and which it is almost incredible to believe could have existed now. *These great Dominions are, in fact, independent states.* We could not have compelled a single one of them to send a man or contribute a penny. But they have sent their best, not so much to help us as to help the Empire of which they are a part.

"*These conditions can never occur again.* It requires great good-will and good sense on the part of both the Dominions and the authorities at home to enable the arrangement to work by which one set of men contribute lives and treasure and yet have no voice as to the way in which those lives and treasure are expended. *That cannot continue. There must be a change.* (Cheers)

"The war has done more, I believe, than many generations in other circumstances could have done in uniting the Empire. The people of this country are prepared to accept any system of closer union which the Dominions may desire to see adopted."²

A few weeks later, the same minister repeated himself. Speaking of the participation of all the British nations in the war, he said: "It is not a possible arrangement that one set of them should contribute the lives and treasure of their people and have no voice in the way in which lives and treasure are expended.

¹ In his preface to the official work attributed to SIR MAX AITKEN: *Canada in Flanders*.

² Speech at a luncheon offered in London, September 13, to SIR EDWARD MORRIS, premier of Newfoundland; — report of the *Canadian Associated Press*.