

Another essential of parliamentary government, if parliament is to retain its character as a deliberative assembly, and the country through Parliament be kept in touch with its own business, is that settlements ought not to be made upon questions of great national importance without consultation with the House of Commons and, through the medium of the House of Commons, with the country. In other words, the time has come when we should have an end to government by Order-in-Council. This practice, which was had enough before the war commenced, became so common throughout its duration, and was sanctioned to such an extent because of the exceptional conditions of that period, that it must be difficult for the ministry to realize how far the practice of ignoring Parliament has gone, and how autocratic in consequence the ministry itself has become. If secret diplomacy of Cabinet Councils is to take the place of public debates and unrestrained questionings of the ministry in the House of Commons, then, instead of becoming increasingly democratic in accordance with the spirit of the times we are reverting back to the days when parliamentary government was a mere pretence, and irresponsible ministers conducted the affairs of state.

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