

the interests of the several nations of the Allies represented there will not in any way suffer.

I should have looked the matter up had I thought this resolution was coming on this evening, but I recall that the British Prime Minister, the right hon. Mr. Lloyd George, or the right hon. Mr. Bonar Law, leader in the House of Commons, stated some time ago that it was inadvisable for any Parliament within the Empire to place itself upon record as to what the representatives at the Peace Conference should or should not do. Therefore, my view is that it would be inadvisable that this Parliament, on the necessarily imperfect information that we have as to the precise situation which exists in Paris, and in Europe, should endorse a resolution of this kind although generally in sympathy with its purport. The wording of the latter part of the resolution is not quite clear. My hon. friend asks:

That in any case Sir Robert Borden should be instructed to claim from the British Government such amount to be paid out of the indemnity which the British Government might receive from Germany.

I am quite sure that the same principle will be applied to all parts of the Empire; that is to say, that if a certain principle is adopted in regard to reparation for losses sustained by nationals, Canada will be on exactly the same footing as Great Britain in regard to it. I am quite sure also that in the event of Germany being able to pay an indemnity, Canada will be placed in the same position as Great Britain and the other Allies in regard to that question. The principle will be the same. I do not know whether my hon. friend means by the wording of his resolution to claim that if Great Britain gets anything Canada should receive from Great Britain the full amount of her war expenditure. I hardly think he means that. But I can assure him that as far as reparation and indemnity are concerned, the same principle will apply to Canada, Great Britain and other parts of the Empire, and that therefore we shall have no cause whatever to complain.

My hon. friend has called attention to the fact that Canada is not likely to obtain any territorial acquisitions, that France will and that Britain may. My hon. friend has no doubt followed the reports of the Peace Conference. In so far as they disclose what has taken place up to the present time, it would appear that what is known as the mandatory system will be adopted. I am not able to speak

[Sir Thomas White.]

authoritatively in regard to that because I think it would be a mistake to anticipate conclusions of the Peace Conference, but if a mandatory system is adopted, no doubt the mandatory nation will hold whatever territories are acquired by it in trust for the Allies, or for civilization itself.

About ten days before the lamented death of the late leader of the Opposition, I discussed with him this mandatory system. It was not very clear to either of us precisely what is meant but he spoke of Great Britain's possession of Egypt and the many and beneficent advantages that had flowed to Egypt from British possession and administration. He spoke with the utmost admiration of Great Britain's justice in dealing with people such as those of Egypt, and he said that if the mandatory system that was being proposed at the Peace Conference would be similar to that under which Great Britain had ruled Egypt, he would feel very easy about it indeed. My hon. friend knows that where Great Britain is administering countries that are not yet self-governing the freest opportunities are afforded the nations of the world for the purposes of trade and otherwise. I think it would be a mistake to assume that if Great Britain, or any other part of the British Empire, should become the mandatory over territory taken from Germany, there will be any direct monetary advantage to Great Britain in that. Great Britain has assumed many burdens in the way of administration and, as my hon. friend knows, her territorial acquisitions have not always represented gain. I feel sure that, in regard to any territory which Great Britain may acquire, there will be an equal advantage to all parts of the Empire in its acquisition. Perhaps I had better not say "equal," but relative advantage; we shall be practically on the same footing and therefore I think it would not be advisable for Canada to set up any special claim by reason of not acquiring any territories if Great Britain or any other part of the Empire should become the mandatory of any territory taken from Germany.

On the whole, I think, in conclusion and by way of recapitulation, that I can assure my hon. friend that the claims of Canada, both for reparation and indemnity are in good hands in Paris and that they have been put forward and will be pressed like those of the other parts of the Empire and of our Allies. I am sure that in regard to Canada Great Britain will desire, as she always has, to act in this matter, as in all others, with the most scrupulous sense of justice and even of generosity.