

pedition and thoroughness, consider the various questions incident to its operation. The Prime Minister of Britain would then have added:

I am satisfied that whatever modifications in the general plan Britain may have to suggest will be ready for submission within a period of six months. I assume that you are all capable of a like measure of expedition.

There would follow an invitation to the conference to meet at London early this year, and the following as a final word of warning:

I have said that the time is now at hand when the doctrine of closer empire economic association, based on free trade within the empire, must be embraced, if we would not have it slip forever beyond our powers of recall. Once gone it were vain to suppose that lesser existing empire agreements will long outlive it, and, that being so, the day will come when we must fight in the markets of the empire the countries of the world shorn of that advantage which it should be in our individual interest to secure and maintain.

To me that is unthinkable, and I appeal to the national representatives here assembled in conference to forget, each one, those prejudices which forbid the realization of that empire-building plan by which we all may advance to greater prosperity.

I await your decision with confidence. . . .

I ask, Mr. Speaker—and I take the silence of hon. gentlemen opposite to be more eloquent than all their words and all their applause—I ask you, Sir, what would have happened had Mr. Ramsay MacDonald come to this country and addressed the right hon. Prime Minister and his government in that fashion? I venture to say there would have been an explosion the like of which we have not experienced in our time. My right hon. friend would never have stood for anything of the kind, and the people of this country would have backed him up in his resentment. But when we consider that this was done for the alleged reason of securing the market in Great Britain for Canadian wheat, it becomes impossible to conceive of how my right hon. friend thought he was going to succeed in that way. Supposing I had gone to the conference and had made a statement of that kind?

Some hon. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I do not wonder at my hon. friends opposite saying, "Oh, oh." If I had spoken as the right hon. Prime Minister spoke at that conference, every hon. gentleman opposite would have been down at the seaside to prevent me from landing on the shores of Canada. We certainly would have had a full chorus.

In all seriousness I ask the house if human nature is any different in Great Britain from what it is here; whether the people of Great Britain are any less sensitive to the manner in

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

which they are approached than are the people of Canada. They have shown very fine restraint in the old land in the way in which they have accepted this attitude on the part of my right hon. friend—a restraint, I am obliged to say, very different from what he would have exercised had anything similar taken place here. But we must not be deceived by the measure of restraint which has been exercised by the people of Great Britain. That has been done out of courtesy, out of a just regard for the relation of the different parts of the empire, one to the other and in an endeavour to help preserve their right relation. It has not been done out of any acquiescence in the particular kind of thing which the Prime Minister has proposed, or in the way in which he went about it.

Again I come back to what I said this afternoon: I cannot attribute my right hon. friend's action as related at all to the sale of the wheat of Canada in Great Britain. The only explanation that satisfies me, having knowledge to some extent of the working of my right hon. friend's mind, is that he wanted this offer refused for reasons best known to himself. Whether it was he thought he was thereby going to help along the idea of an empire economic unit I do not know. But we all know that there is a strong suspicion that my right hon. friend does not find the Labour government of Britain congenial, that he would much rather see the Conservative party in office there; and there are some who have had in mind that my right hon. friend's action was due to the fact that he was becoming, secretly or openly, as you care to put it, an ally of the political party in Great Britain that holds views somewhat similar to his own, that he was anxious to create a prejudice against the Labour government and put them in a position where they would appear to have refused the offer of Canada, to have been unwilling to accept such a simple principle as that of preference and the like. That opinion has become very general. Personally I do not entertain it.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Well, I may be wrong. After all, my hon. friends understand the Tory mentality better than I do. They certainly gave away their hand when they made that interruption. I will leave it, Mr. Speaker, to the public to draw its own conclusion, and perhaps my right hon. friend can give us his statement of the position. But I say that when under the ostensible reason of finding a market for Canadian wheat, the government in office in Great Britain was