

Government of Great Britain. Whether the King has or will authorize the Premier of Great Britain to sign documents on behalf of the British Empire or not, is not for us temporarily an important point.

What is important is that this clause, whatever it may mean, should be so clearly drafted that there will be no doubt as to the intention, and it apparently has never received any consideration from that standpoint.

As there is no other of the eight chief industrial powers which has self-governing Dominions, this clause is plainly intended to refer to Great Britain and its Dominions and if the actual meaning of the clause is stated plainly it would be that the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland with four other members, namely, Canada, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand (leaving India out of consideration for the present) shall be entitled to one member and no one of these five members shall be entitled to either be nominated or take any part in the election of the other four members of the Governing Body.

If this is the desire of the Government of Great Britain I would say that it would be only fair that they should say so clearly. If they are compelled to take this position by other nations, that should be made clear. It is much too serious a matter to leave in an indefinite state.

It has apparently been the trend of mind of those dealing with the question to compare in size and importance the so called British Empire with the United States. They have apparently for this purpose overlooked the fact that the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland with its colonies and dependencies, and without any self-governing Dominions, would compare extremely favourably with Belgium, Switzerland or Holland who may possibly be three members of the Governing Body without any election and entitled to absolute equality. The fetish of sovereignty has been used to accomplish many absurd things and I hope that it will never be necessary for this.

There appears to be a question on the part of most of the people with whom these matters have been raised to consider that I am raising them for the purpose of making trouble. I gather this from apparently no doubt joking remarks about Canada or parts of it declaring war on the British Empire. I am not referring to this in regard to you, as I have no doubt of your appreciation of the circumstances, but simply to make clear that my only desire is to have these documents so fixed, if possible, as to make everyone in Canada an enthusiastic advocate for continuing some kind of connection with the United Kingdom. I had not even thought that this was the time for considering the question of my own action in regard to the matter. You are quite at liberty to use this or any other letters as you see fit—even to publishing in the newspaper.

Yours very truly,

ARTHUR L. SIFTON