

in their individual capacity to do their best to prevent the parties to which they belong from treating the question as a party issue.

Now I come to what I think it should not do, and I will illustrate what I mean by your present situation here. Several people suggested to me that the Round Table groups should decide whether to support the policy of beginning naval preparations by establishing a new wing of the Imperial navy, or whether they should support the project of a Canadian navy. That in any case would, I think, be unjustifiable during the stage of inquiry. Individual members of the Round Table are free as air to support whichever policy they think best. But I see no justification for the organization, as a whole, doing so, and in my opinion the same would apply to any organization formed for educating public opinion on what I have called the ultimate issue. Imagine such an association to exist at the present moment, and you will see at once what would happen. Suppose it decided, as an association, to back the government's policy, the immediate effect would be to exclude from its ranks all the adherents of the opposition. There would be nothing in the world to prevent the individual members of the association, whether Liberal or Conservative, taking whatever course they judged best in the field of active politics. Once let the association enter that field it will close against itself its own proper field—that of educating public opinion on matters which are not as yet the subject of party controversies and ought never to become so. It must fix men's eyes on the true goal of citizenship. It must convince them that they cannot stop short of that goal if they are to preserve that citizenship at all. It must make them understand why they should reach it, and above all what sacrifices they must make to do so. But I submit that it cannot