

I have always been under the impression that the members of the two older parties are under a disadvantage as compared with hon. gentlemen comprising the independent groups, in that sometimes we have to subordinate our views and opinions to those of the party as a whole, for the purpose of accomplishing something which it is considered will be for the general good of the country, although it does not exactly commend itself to the views of certain individuals in the party. I had always envied the independence of hon. gentlemen representing the United Farmers of Alberta until I heard their leader last night stating that when the convention of the United Farmers in Alberta passes a resolution, the members representing that group in this house are obliged to advocate the conclusions set forth in that resolution, and are obliged to argue for them and to urge them upon the house regardless of what they may have stood for in times past. I do not want to misrepresent the hon. member for Acadia. Here are his words:

The United Farmers of Alberta took the matter into their own hands, and when that organization in convention passes a resolution on any particular subject which may be a matter of debate in this house, or a matter which we will have to vote for or against, then we are under the obligation of supporting the attitude of the convention of the United Farmers of Alberta.

Mr. IRVINE: Does my hon. friend know that those are the people whom we represent?

Mr. ILSLEY: I am simply saying that it is a cast-iron discipline which is just as real as any discipline imposed upon the members of the two older parties by their party organization. Moreover, that when hon. members, representing, as I think they should attempt to represent, the people of the Dominion of Canada as a whole, trying, as they should try, to look at matters from the nation-wide viewpoint, take their instructions, so to speak, from conventions in Alberta, which professedly are looking at national problems from the standpoint of one particular occupation and of one particular part of the Dominion, they are going further than we in the older parties are ever asked to go; because when we compromise upon a policy decided upon in party caucus, that policy is certainly based upon nation-wide considerations.

I now come to the subamendment to the resolution. The Australian treaty, which came into effect on October 1, 1925, met with a great deal of criticism during the first two or three years of its existence. Members of the official opposition in particular stood in their

places and denounced the Australian treaty itself, not its extension to New Zealand, in the most unmeasured terms—

Mr. GARLAND (Bow River): In the most measured terms, I should imagine.

Mr. ILSLEY: Unmeasured terms is correct. In particular, the acting leader of the opposition at that time, the hon. member for South Wellington (Mr. Guthrie) in the very able speech which he made on the budget a year ago, stated that the treaty should be abrogated at once. I want to refer to that utterance because the change of front on the part of the official opposition this session is very noticeable, and is a striking tribute to the treaty itself and to the success that it has met with in promoting an increase of trade between Australia and Canada. This is what the member for South Wellington said on the occasion to which I refer, when he was the authoritative spokesman of the opposition. I am reading from page 751 of Hansard of March 7, 1929:

Perhaps the greatest gold-brick that was ever handed by a government to anyone was handed the agriculturists of this country when the Australian treaty was passed. I understand the treaty was negotiated by the Minister of Finance himself, and it has proved to be probably the greatest direct blow that agriculture has had in this country in many years. I cannot understand why the minister does not denounce or give notice to and put an end to that treaty at once.

I remember the dramatic way in which he made that declaration to the house and the loud applause that came from the hon. gentlemen who were sitting behind him drinking in his words on that occasion.

Mr. DUNNING: And alongside him, too.

Mr. ILSLEY: But there is a change of front this year. We have had from the opposition many tributes to the treaty, and similarly from the Conservative press of the country and its various organizations.

Some reference has been made to the National Dairy Council of Canada. I have been reading the reports of their meetings during the last few years, and if my recollection serves me correctly, the council went on record two or three years ago as being opposed to the Australian treaty and demanding its abrogation in unequivocal terms. This year, however, they have taken a different stand. They are favourable to a continuation of the treaty with some mild revisions, just as the hon. member for Vancouver Centre is. I refer to the report of the eleventh annual meeting of the council, held at the Royal York hotel, Toronto, on October 18 and 19, 1929. At page 51 of the