

TIGHT BINDING.

C127692

Before his Delegation had left Canada, suspicions had been aroused which had only been allayed by making clear that they were proceeding not to an Imperial Cabinet which could take decisions, but to a Conference. He recalled that after the Treaty of Versailles Sir Robert Borden had emphasised the national note and the responsibility of the Dominion for its own policy. As long as that note was struck at these Imperial Conferences the Empire could be held together; but otherwise he foresaw great difficulties.

Mr CHAMBERLAIN said that everyone must recognise the force of what Mr Mackenzie King had said. There was no use in reaching agreements here in London, if they were going to cause difficulties in other parts of the Empire. He felt that the Conference must be guided by Mr Mackenzie King on the Canadian aspects.

Mr MACKENZIE KING thought that the substance of what was in the Resolutions could be included, but it must be put in the right form, and it must be made clear that the Conference was not laying down a policy for the Empire as a whole to which all Governments would be committed.

Mr LYONS asked whether the following words at the end of the first paragraph, -

"While reserving to their Parliaments
their individual rights of decision
and action"

did not meet Mr Mackenzie King's difficulty.

Mr MACKENZIE KING said that those words were most helpful. As members of a Government, he and his colleagues stood for the substance of the Resolutions, but if they were accepted in the present form Parliament would insist at once on a debate, an amendment would be moved, and he could not say

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