

*The Address—Mr. Mackenzie King*

for people to live elsewhere at which greater freedom of trade between Great Britain and Canada has been obtained.

This country will I believe come to view with a good deal of concern the world effects of this conference. I shall in this connection give but one quotation the importance of which I think my right hon. friend will appreciate, as it comes from one whom he cited as a very high authority when speaking on world problems in April of last year. At that time he referred to Sir Arthur Salter, a director of the economic financial section of the League of Nations and general secretary of the reparations commission, as being one of the foremost authorities on trade matters. What has Sir Arthur Salter to say about this world aspect of the effect of the conference? In an article published on October 2, he states:

Future development of world organization lies between greater freedom of trade and intercourse between nations and larger economic units, not more in the way of isolation.

The former will help to remedy currency and prices situation in a normal way; the latter would aggravate that situation and bring certain nations to bankruptcy; the former would lead to peace and progress, the latter almost certainly to civil and international strife.

The world is the only real economic unit.

I think that quotation expresses in a paragraph what is of greater significance in the agreements which this parliament is to be called upon to approve. If as a result of these agreements there is going to be greater freedom of trade not only as between the different parts of the empire but as between the empire and other parts of the world, then we will be heading in the direction of peace and good will and the future progress of mankind. If, on the other hand, these agreements have the effect of developing trade in some ways within the empire but still keeping tariffs where they are, of taking away with one hand what is given with the other, of causing tariffs to be raised in one place where they are lowered in another, of failing to make possible greater freedom of trade between the nations of the world, then their effect will be detrimental and harmful, they will be leading in the wrong direction, the direction, as Sir Arthur Salter says of civil and international strife. With responsibilities so vast in arriving at a wise decision we are entitled surely to have the necessary time for consideration of these agreements before being asked to pronounce our views upon them in this House of Commons; and certainly this parliament is entitled to view them with open eyes and not with eyes which have been blindfolded by hon. gentlemen opposite.

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

Right Hon. R. B. BENNETT (Prime Minister): May I thank the right hon. gentleman (Mr. Mackenzie King) for the felicitous terms in which he referred to the birthday of my colleague and friend, the senior member for Halifax (Mr. Black). Those of us who have been privileged to know him for many years rejoice that his period of service in this world has been so long extended. We trust that many more years may be granted to him, in which he may be permitted to demonstrate, as he has done in the past, his usefulness to his country.

I fancy, Mr. Speaker, that most of us listened with some surprise to the observations of the right hon. gentleman this afternoon—surprise not untempered with regret. The surprise was that the effort was so feeble; the regret was that it was so lacking in constructive suggestions. I need hardly remind this house that we had expected one thing at least in which we are not disappointed. There was no policy that he did not adopt, no suggestion he did not make that might catch a single vote. He ran true to form. There was nothing that had been heard in the heavens above or the earth beneath or the waters under the earth to which appeal was not made for the purpose of deriving some assistance and support. But there was one thing in which the hon. gentleman ran particularly true to form. The same right hon. gentleman who went to and fro in this country and said: "Who will represent Canada at the Imperial conference in 1930?" could not fail—and he did not—to disguise his spleen that there should have been a successful conference in Canada in which he did not take part. There was nothing he could do to injure that conference that he did not do before it was held. There was no platform upon which he appeared that he did not endeavour in some way to make it more difficult for the government of his country to represent Canada at that conference. There was no time at which he appeared that he did not throw distrust and doubt upon the conference as to whether it would be held at all or not. He was always putting in innuendoes, dropping one here and one there lest peradventure there should be a conference. Now that one has been held, he comes before the house to-night and makes a specious plea, seeming to show, with his tongue in his cheek, that he supports it in one breath while he opposes it with the other. It is no wonder hon. members on his side looked at him trying to discover what he meant. It is no wonder the country, when it reads what he says, will find it difficult to know what he meant.