

ours, which has taken such a part in this great struggle. It is inconceivable that Canada should be content to occupy a subordinate position in the Empire; to have the issues that affect the lives and welfare of her families, and citizens determined by men living elsewhere, and to have no voice whatever in their determination. There are only two ways in which Canada can have a voice in foreign policy. She can have it as an independent nation, or by co-operation with the nations that now form part of the British Empire. Here again I have not changed; I believe that the future of Canada is inseparably associated with that of the Mother Country and the other nations of the Empire. Canada's future is to be found in association with these nations.

Sir SAM HUGHES: I am very glad that the hon. gentleman is coming to the right line. Now, would he kindly tell us where the question of responsibility for the colonies—I use the term in a broad sense—comes in?

Mr. ROWELL: Responsibility for the colonies?

Sir SAM HUGHES: Responsibility under the new form. There must be responsibility in all governments, or there should be.

Mr. ROWELL: I will come to that point in a moment.

Sir SAM HUGHES: Well, I have a fad of my own.

Mr. ROWELL: I think I have given my hon. friend a good deal of information and light so far, but I will tell him this: the Imperial War Cabinet, as was announced by Mr. Lloyd George and Sir Robert Borden, was a creation for the purposes of the war. The question of the permanent constitutional relationship is to be settled at a conference to be called after the war, and all these other questions will come up then when the permanent constitutional relationships are being settled.

May I point out the contrast between 1911 and 1917? In 1911 the statesmen of the overseas Dominions were admitted for the first time and on one occasion to a review of foreign policy—in 1917 and 1918 the statesmen of the overseas Dominions and of India meet around a common council table with the statesmen of the Mother Country, there to consider together these very questions for the benefit of the whole Empire.

Mr. NESBITT: If a representative of this Dominion did not agree with the other

[Mr. Rowell.]

members of the War Cabinet, would it not be his duty to report back to this Parliament and to get its approval or otherwise of his position?

Mr. ROWELL: Absolutely. Nobody can be bound except by the assent of his own Government, and his own Parliament. That is clearly set forth in the statement of Sir Robert Borden which I read to the House.

Sir SAM HUGHES: Am I to understand—
Some hon. MEMBERS: Order.

Sir SAM HUGHES: If you gentlemen will kindly keep yourselves in place, I shall—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order.

Sir SAM HUGHES: Does the minister mean to say that at that conference in 1911 there was no consultation with or asking of the opinion of ministers and others concerned? Because I can tell him to the contrary that there was.

Mr. ROWELL: I did not say anything of the kind, Mr. Speaker; I quoted Mr. Asquith and I said that that was the first occasion upon which the statesmen of the Empire had been admitted into the secrets of British foreign policy.

Now, let me come back to the point that I was discussing. Perhaps I could make my statement clearer to the House if my hon. friend (Sir Sam Hughes) would permit me to proceed without interruption. Most of the questions he has in mind may be answered by what I have to say.

While we have been claiming the status of a nation within the Empire since 1897, we did not get the status of a nation until 1917, when the statesmen of Canada and of the other Dominions met with the statesmen of the Mother Country around a common council board to determine questions of common interest relating to the whole Empire. So that during the period of the war there has been a remarkable development in our constitutional position, not by way of a curtailment of our rights or powers, but by way of a great expansion and enlargement of those rights and powers.

Now, my hon. friend from Kamouraska quoted from an address of the Prime Minister in London in June last in reference to the change in our constitutional position and he suggested that we had departed from the resolution passed at the meeting of the Imperial War Conference on April 16, 1917. Let me read that resolution:

The Imperial War Conference are of opinion that the readjustment of the constitutional relations of the component parts of the Empire is too important and intricate a subject to be