

I should say at once that this resolution does not necessarily purpose, or even look to, any change in the fiscal arrangements of the United Kingdom. It does not involve taxation of food; it does not involve taxation of anything. As far as the fiscal system of the United Kingdom is concerned I followed when in England precisely the same course that I have carried out in this Parliament and in this country—I declined to interfere in matters which are of domestic concern and should be the subject of domestic control in the United Kingdom. I declined to invite them to change their fiscal policy. These matters are within their control, as our fiscal policy is within ours. And I would go further and say that the people of Canada would not desire the people of the United Kingdom to change their fiscal policy for the purpose alone of giving a preference to the producers of this country, especially if the proposed fiscal changes should involve any supposed injustice, should be regarded as unfair or oppressive by a considerable portion of the people of the United Kingdom. But what this proposal looks to, as I understand it, is this—that we can within this Empire establish better and cheaper facilities of communication than we have enjoyed up to the present time. That, I believe, is the line along which the change indicated will proceed. The question of transportation has been a very live one, a very important one, to the producers of this country, especially those of the western provinces. We know that before the commencement of the war the cost of transportation across the Atlantic increased twofold or threefold. There was sometimes a dearth of ships. I hope and believe that there will be concerted action and coöperation between the government of the United Kingdom and the governments of the Dominions, by which speedier, better and more economical transportation will be provided between the Mother Country and the Dominions, and between the Dominions themselves. So in this light I am confident that the resolution passed by the Conference will receive favourable consideration by the people of this country.

The next resolution I will take up deals with the question of naval defence. The resolution unanimously adopted is as follows:

That the Admiralty be requested to work out immediately after the conclusion of the war what they consider the most effective scheme of Naval Defence for the Empire for the consideration of the several Governments summoned to this Conference, with such recommendations as the Admiralty consider necessary in that respect for the Empire's future security.

It would be impossible to do that during the war; the Admiralty frankly told us so. In the first place they are