

Mr. D. D. MCKENZIE: Before the President of the Council leaves the constitutional phase of the subject, I would like to put a question to him. The hon. member says that this Council, or Cabinet, of which he speaks, is constitutional and based on constitutional principles. Will the hon. member explain where he finds any basis for such an arrangement in the constitution of Canada, for instance?

Mr. ROWELL: I said it was a development of the British constitution, like so many others, to meet the exigencies of the situation, and that is the way all the great developments in the British constitution have been made. In that respect the British people have differed from most other nations under free and democratic governments. The majority of nations have prescribed for themselves a written constitution, and they must act within the terms, or the limits of that constitution. The British people, on the other hand, have had confidence in their ability to meet any situation when it arose, and they have adopted their constitutional procedure to meet the exigency of the case. That is the way this Imperial War Cabinet developed.

When my hon. friend asked his question, I was pointing out that the Imperial War Cabinet does not deal with any matter with which the Parliament of Canada previously dealt, or over which it had jurisdiction. There was always an area of sovereignty over which we had no jurisdiction, such as foreign affairs and matters relating to the issues of peace or war. Over these Canada had no control except in so far as she might make representations to the Imperial Government which dealt with these matters. Now, Mr. Speaker, the development is this: Our autonomy has been enlarged, our self-government has been enlarged, Canada has reached the status of a nation, not in name but in fact. Canada now has her voice heard in that area of sovereignty over which she previously had no jurisdiction. The representatives of Canada meet with the representatives of the other Dominions and the Mother Country to determine these questions of foreign policy—the issues of peace or war. There has been no curtailment of our sovereignty. On the other hand, there has been an extension of sovereignty, or self-government, to the people of Canada.

Mr. E. LAPOINTE: Ordinarily, when a member of a Cabinet disagrees with his colleagues on a question of policy, the

course for him to follow is to resign from the Cabinet. Will my hon. friend say whether this course will be followed by a member of the Imperial War Cabinet if he disagrees with other members of the Cabinet on any question of policy brought before it?

Mr. ROWELL: The answer to my hon. friend's question is this: where the Cabinet, as in the past, is responsible to a particular parliament, that has been the constitutional procedure. But this is not a cabinet like any other cabinet.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

Mr. ROWELL: It is, as the Prime Minister has said, a cabinet of governments in which the heads of governments represent their own peoples. You may call it a council, if you will; I will not quarrel over the term. But it is an assembly, an organ of government, a place where the representatives of the Mother Country and of all the Dominions and of India meet together to discuss matters of common concern and to agree on lines of co-operation affecting the whole Empire.

Mr. ROSS: My hon. friend has not answered the question of the member for Kamouraska.

Mr. ROWELL: The question is answered. The difficulty with my hon. friend on the other side is that while he professes to be a Liberal, he cannot readily change. There should be a readiness to change to meet new situations and new developments; there should be new machinery of government to meet new exigencies.

Mr. ROSS: I admit I cannot change just as quickly as my hon. friend.

Mr. ROWELL: I have not changed; I have stood for compulsory military service and the backing up of our boys at the front.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order.

Mr. ROWELL: My hon. friend (Mr. Ross) should not get nervous when he does not have his own way.

Let me come back to the question we were discussing. What is to be the future relation of Canada to Great Britain and to the other Dominions of the Empire? Are we to continue in a position where we have no voice in questions of foreign policy or the issues of peace or war? That is inconceivable on the part of a nation such as