

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Leader of the Opposition): Would my hon. friend be kind enough to indicate who is to be the acting Prime Minister in his absence, also the acting Minister of Finance, the acting Minister of Trade and Commerce, the acting Minister of Justice and the acting Solicitor General?

Mr. BENNETT: The acting Prime Minister will be the senior privy councillor in the government, Sir George H. Perley; the acting Minister of Trade and Commerce will be the Minister of Railways and Canals, Hon. R. J. Manion; the acting Minister of Justice will be Hon. W. A. Gordon, Minister of Immigration and Colonization; the acting Minister of Finance will be Hon. E. B. Ryckman, the Minister of National Revenue, and the duties of the Solicitor General (Mr. Dupré) will be discharged by the department, as I understand that it is not customary to make any provision in that regard.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Mr. Speaker, as my hon. friend and his colleagues are about to leave for the imperial conference, I would like to express on behalf of those of us who are of the opposition our best wishes for the advancement of Canadian interests in common with those of other parts of the empire as a consequence of their participation in the conference. My hon. friend has just drawn attention to the distinction to be made between the aims which we have in common and the methods by which they may be accomplished. We on this side may differ very strongly with respect to some of the methods which we understand he proposes to adopt in relation to matters of inter-imperial and international importance, but as to the aim which he and his colleagues have in view, that of advancing the interests of Canada, we are in complete accord. I say to my hon. friend in all sincerity that we are conscious of the great burdens as well as the great responsibilities which have fallen upon his shoulders. Those of us who have attended previous conferences appreciate to what extent the responsibilities and burdens of an imperial conference are going to add to those he is already carrying, but I trust that he may be able to bear those burdens with health and strength and return from the conference personally refreshed by the opportunities of exchange of thought which such gatherings afford, and, as I have said already, be in a position to announce to parliament when it reassembles that as a result of Canada's representation at

[Mr. Bennett.]

the conference the interests of our country in common with those of the empire as a whole have been considerably advanced.

Mr. ROBERT GARDINER (Acadia): May I take this opportunity to support the remarks of the right hon. the leader of the opposition. We in this corner of the house hope the Prime Minister and his colleagues will be successful in their mission to the conference. I am sure, now that this contentious legislation has passed through the house, hon. members, and indeed the people of Canada, will wish success to the Prime Minister and his colleagues.

Mr. BENNETT: Perhaps this morning I anticipated what I might usefully say now. With great sincerity however, I would like to say to the right hon. leader of the opposition (Mr. Mackenzie King) and the hon. member for Acadia (Mr. Gardiner) that I very greatly appreciate their good wishes. I am not one who for a single moment underestimates the responsibilities which must be borne and the burdens involved in making the journey to which reference has been made. I am sure I envy my friends their wider experience and greater knowledge of the operations of such conferences. After all however, one can do one's best for the country he happens to represent. I assure this house that to the extent of our ability we will endeavour to interpret the genius, the hopes, the aspirations and the ambitions of the Canadian people amongst those with whom we may do business. I am sure that has been the effort of those who have preceded us and it will be the effort of those who follow us. I appreciate very greatly the generous observations of the right hon. the leader of the opposition. I am sure I am stating what is in the minds of many men when I say that next to a battle lost there is nothing quite as sad as a battle won. To my mind the saddest thing is a battle won. There are disappointments of hopes, there are changed conditions, there are other outlooks, and I am sure that I have endeavoured in my own way to regard many of these matters in the light of the point of view of others. I appreciate to the full the generous attitude the right hon. gentleman has shown towards problems with which we had to deal and I desire to say how much his action has been appreciated. I wish to thank him for the generous expression of good will he has given on behalf of himself and his party and I hope we may be able in some small way to live up to their hopes and expectations and do credit to our country with advantage to our people.