

many Canadians of British descent to the institutions which the British Government now represents, if they were once absolutely convinced of the impossibility of Canada achieving her highest political destiny, as a unit within a greater unity, as a self-governing Dominion within a self-governing Empire.

The free people of Canada may not always be governed in all their external relations by the free people of the British Isles. Canadians believe that, with the assumption of corresponding duties and responsibilities, they should be conceded rights and liberties from which they are now excluded.

It is, perhaps, to be expected that British Ministers, who are now only responsible to British constituencies, will always be reluctant to extend the privileges of British citizenship to the inhabitants of the over-seas Dominions. They will doubtless seek in the future, as in the past, to maintain their exclusive authority. It was not, therefore, a complete surprise that the representatives of the British Government, present at the recent Imperial Conference, should have expressly declared, and even more clearly indicated by their attitude than by their words, that that exclusive authority in external affairs, which is now vested in the Government of the United Kingdom, will never willingly be shared by them with representatives of the Dominions.

It is true that the representatives of the Government of Great Britain have suggested as the maximum of possible concessions to the Dominions that the subordinate Governments shall be kept more fully informed of the foreign or external policies of the dominant executive. But it is not merely a matter of information, it is a fundamental political principle that is involved, that of participation in the joint direction and control—of sharing in the responsibility of advising the Sovereign—in matters of collective interests.

There are politicians in England, possibly they constitute the majority, who, apparently failing to comprehend the existing conditions, declare that it is impossible for the Government of the United Kingdom to share that responsibility with representatives of the Dominions. Do they represent the intelligently matured views of the democracy of the United Kingdom? We must ascertain definitely whether the British people are with us or against us.