

lution defining the position it was thought desirable that officer should have, but the first step taken, the step most likely to lead to success, and which did lead to success, was to have a conference or consultation with the Imperial authorities and obtain their consent to the proposition; and then the representative of this Government was granted those powers and given the position he now holds. It therefore occurs to me, recognizing the position we hold as part of the Empire, subject to the control of the Imperial Parliament, that so far as our foreign relations are concerned, it would be well, if this Parliament desired greater and more complete representation, that we should follow that course, and that before committing ourselves as to the proper form in which the desired representation should be had or as to the particular title the officer or representative of this country should demand, we should obtain the views of Her Majesty's Government and have that question settled in advance. There are many objections, which have been fully pointed out already, to the particular position being given the officer or representative of this country which is asked by the resolution now in your hands. For instance, he is not merely to be a representative of Canada but is to be attached to the staff of Her Majesty's Minister at Washington—that is, so far as regards fuller representation in the States. I have alluded to the subject in general of the representation of this country wherever it may be deemed necessary and in any country whatsoever. But it appears to me that we would trammel the agent or commissioner of this Government by placing him in the position defined in the resolution before us; and it seems to me, if it be possible, and I see no reason why it should not, that an agent holding somewhat the position referred to by the Minister of Finance, who could report upon trade or any other question we desire, an agent who could represent us commercially and represent us politically, could do so with far greater effect and in a far freer manner, if not attached to the staff of the British Minister. If, for instance, he went to Washington and resided there with the approval of the British Government, as the agent of this Government and in hearty sympathy and co-operation with the British Minister, he could represent us more effectually than if he went there in the capacity implied by the original resolution. The same may be said as to other governments. For instance, in connection with the position of agent of this country in France, I think it would be infinitely better for him and us, that if we desire to put that agent in a political position, as a representative of this country, beyond its commercial interests, it would be far better to obtain the necessary powers and authority, so that he could have the free communication necessary with the British Empire, than that he should become attached to and subordinate to the British representative in Paris. I take it that the commissioner in London to-day is in a far stronger position, in so far as the importance and interests of this country are concerned, in holding the position of High Commissioner at the Court of St. James, than if he were attached for instance to the Colonial Office. The position as an *attaché* either in Washington, London or in the court of any foreign country, situated as we are, with our relations to the Empire, would

be an extremely difficult one for that officer to properly fill. Many inconveniences would arise, many difficulties would occur, as to how far it would be proper to communicate to this Government direct the information he received while holding that office, through his relations with the Minister, in whose hands and before whom come so many subjects with which he had particularly no concern, or in reference to which great responsibility would rest upon the British Minister, subjects at times so delicate that information could go between no other than the foreign Minister in England and his representative abroad. On the general question, the leader of the Opposition, I think, dwelt upon the inconveniences arising from indirect communication, according to the ordinary routine, and gave good evidence of the inconveniences that have arisen in the past. No doubt in many experiences of this country in the past, that inconvenience has been felt and has been certainly productive of no very great good; but at the same time he will recognize that in recent years, and even in the last year or two, much has been changed in that direction. A great change has taken place even, for instance, at Washington. It is the custom in dealing with the United States now more than ever to assign in the various disputes a representative from Canada direct with the British Minister, not merely in matters of negotiations but even in much more responsible and important matters. For instance, touching the Behring Sea question itself, I may mention what was stated in the British Parliament recently with reference to the court of arbitration or board of arbitrators on that great question. The Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs stated they were in communication with the Canadian Government before coming to a conclusion in the matter. I myself, as Minister of Marine, had the opportunity, which was afforded to me by the British Government only a year or two ago, of attending on the British Minister at Washington in order that the views of the Canadian Government should be thoroughly understood and the case properly presented to that Minister when a conference between the British Minister and the Secretary of State took place, with the view of making an arrangement for settling the question in dispute touching Behring Sea, and notably for some *modus vivendi* with reference to the preservation of the seal species. I point to this to show that there is every possibility that, by friendly conference and previous consultation with the British Government before propounding a definite scheme here or attempting to act upon one, success will be attained, and the importance of fuller representation recognized. Our agent attached to the diplomatic staff in any country of course would not be recognized and could not be recognized by a foreign government. It has not been suggested by any one in this debate that we should seek that. What we do desire is to be fully and quickly informed in foreign countries upon those subjects which affect Canada, and that we should have some one at the elbow, as it were, of the gentleman who represents the British Government with that foreign government, so that not only would Canadian affairs be thoroughly understood, but Canadian interests promptly protected and guarded. I said that no hon. gentleman seemed to desire that there should be a direct diplomatic representative of Canada at Washington, but I may correct that, because,