

independence. Now, do not let those of us who hold that view flatter ourselves into the illusion that it is understood by any large body of our fellow-citizens. And because it is not understood it is not held by them. The vast majority, in my opinion, assume like the vast majority of people in every community, that as they have done and as they have been, so they may continue to do and to be. If a constitutional revision is indeed necessary, it is inconceivable that it could be effected without the deliberate consent of the majority of the electors in each of the countries concerned. Now, personally, I should view with alarm any attempt to force this question for decision in the immediate future, simply because I do not believe that the vast majority have grasped the issue at stake. Their own place in this world-wide Commonwealth they value beyond price. They realize, though dimly, that it is a State greater than a Nation, the central arch of human society upon which the races and nations of five continents are poised. But they do not see how perilous a structure it is so long as its piers rest on foundations no wider than the British Isles. They do not see that if it is to last, its buttresses must be spread to the New World as well as to the Old. My unquenchable belief is that they can be made to see it and be made to see it in time, and that when they do, they, like their predecessors, will make but one choice. I think more of Freedom than to believe that men bred under it, when once they realize that to them is given the power to save from incalculable disaster the whole of human society, will shrink from the responsibility cast upon them. The American colonies were never offered the choice of assuming that full responsibility; no one ever unravelled or laid before them the real issues at stake, and the greatest Commonwealth that the world