

of the National Liberal Association, which is quite a different position from that of organizer of any party; but he has not agreed to accept that position as yet, although I repeat, I hope he will.

Mr. BENNETT: If he is president of the National Liberal Association I might have known he would hardly accept a position by the name I have indicated. Part of the literature sent out by that association I had the privilege of reading to-day. From a perusal of that document you would not think this country was passing through a crisis or anything else. It is one of those rather amusing documents not intended for serious consumption; and the sudden gathering of a few of the faithful in Halifax not long since was, I presume, for the same purpose.

Mr. RALSTON: Would the Prime Minister—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Sit down.

Mr. RALSTON: Would the Prime Minister give the house his authority for stating that this document was left by Mr. Massey in the sense of being political propaganda? Because that is the implication he endeavoured to convey.

Mr. BENNETT: I certainly endeavoured to leave that impression. At a gathering of a small number of people it was left with them by Mr. Massey. But as the hon. gentleman says, a document similar in terms did, I believe, appear in the Canadian Forum. You see that is the way it is done—never attack directly; do it obliquely.

I wish now to direct my attention for a few moments only to the matter that the right hon. gentleman referred to this afternoon—the Imperial conference to be held in this city this year. It is said by him to be regarded as the adjournment of the former conference. I believe it is not so regarded; at least I am so informed. It may be that the conference of 1930 was a failure. The right hon. gentleman said it has been described by someone as a tragedy.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: By the Prime Minister of Australia.

Mr. BENNETT: Yes, Mr. Scullin.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: And the ex-Prime Minister, Mr. Bruce.

Mr. BENNETT: Mr. Bruce was dealing with another phase altogether.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: No.

Mr. BENNETT: Just let me proceed.

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

An hon. MEMBER: He doesn't like it.

Mr. BENNETT: Do not be so anxious to interrupt without being able to offer any contribution of assistance. I am always willing to be interrupted by those who have any suggestions to make that call for an answer, but the suggestions that come from the hon. gentleman who has been making them sotto voce are not calculated either to enhance the debate or to render any contribution to our knowledge. Whether or not the conference was a failure is a matter of opinion. So far as my position in it is concerned, it seems to afford great satisfaction to a number of gentlemen opposite to endeavour to have it said that I am responsible for what they conceive to be the failure of the conference.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

Mr. BENNETT: Well, if they are interested in reading Hansard they will find that as long ago as 1928 I had said that if we had power my first effort would be to endeavour to call an economic conference of the British empire in this city. I went to London with a very definite idea in my mind. I gave expression to it, and I believed it would be received exactly as it was received. But I said there was a principle that had to be settled first. Those who will do me the honour of reading what I said will find clearly stated the principle that must first be settled. The electors of Great Britain settled it. As soon as they had settled it I invited the representatives of every part of the British Empire to come to this city to a conference, and the date has been fixed for the 21st day of July. They are coming, so they say. Therefore the purpose which I had in mind in 1928, which I never failed to keep before me, the one ambition that I entertained if we did come to power I hoped to see realized. In that regard may I say that I have under my hand the memorandum left by Sir Wilfrid Laurier in 1902, when he ceased to agree with his colleagues and took a definite stand with respect to Imperial preference. It is true it was not followed by action, it is true it was not followed by any considered effort to achieve it, but when I read it it will be realized that we at least have now seen accomplished that which he said should be accomplished but failed to accomplish, as did his successors in office. Let us look at it. Because of the misstatements that have been made from time to time, year after year, I am going to take the trouble to read this into Hansard. It has to do with the conference of 1902 beginning at page 36. The Canadian ministers handed in the following