

together to secure a maximum achievement in our joint effort. We were partners, not only in a commonwealth, but in a crusade. And the fine spirit thus engendered proved to be of critical value when, after the war, we came to complete that review of the empire's constitution which had received its preliminary survey while we were in such temper.

Nor was the work confined to our discussions round the conference table. The visiting dominion premiers took advantage of their presence here to travel around the country, to meet with the people of the homeland, and deepen by speech and interview our sense of common purpose and imperial unity. Mr. Hughes, of Australia, had done some invaluable work of this order when he was here in 1916. Meantime, his work was continued by Sir Robert Borden of Canada. . . .

I suggest to the house and to the country that this estimate by Mr. Lloyd George of the value of the imperial war cabinet and imperial war conferences appears to be very important, therefore I have read it into the record; and I hope it will provide food for thought for the right hon. gentleman and his government.

The Prime Minister intimated that membership in the Canadian cabinet would be an embarrassment to the Canadian government representative in London, as well as to the government itself; and to establish his point he introduced somewhat novel constitutional principles. But it is a matter of record that Mr. Bonar Law told Sir Robert Borden in the last war that Sir George Perley's status as acting high commissioner, until the formation of the union government, was greatly enhanced by his membership in the cabinet, and that his prestige was greater than it would have been if he were merely high commissioner. Accepting Mr. Bonar Law's advice, Sir Robert Borden retained Sir George Perley as a member of the cabinet until the formation of the union government, at which time Sir George became permanent high commissioner, and Sir Edward Kemp, overseas minister.

With reference to our diplomatic relations with France, I have a few observations to make. The delicate diplomatic situation between ourselves and unoccupied France calls, for, I think, greater clarification than the Prime Minister has given us. Every Canadian, be he of French- or English-speaking origin, desires the rehabilitation of France as a great nation, and is prepared to do whatever is possible to that end. I do not suggest what is the duty of the government in the premises. I do think it is the clear duty of this government to take every necessary action to strengthen the hand of Marshal Petain and his government as at present constituted, but only so long as they fight against the pressure being exerted to secure direct French collaboration against Britain and the empire.

[Mr. R. B. Hanson.]

If we can offer any inducement or assistance to enable them to resist the conqueror's efforts to secure Mediterranean bases and the use of the French fleet, we should do so. But we must safeguard ourselves against any possible advantage being gained by the enemy through our continued maintenance of diplomatic relations with the Vichy government.

I would ask the Prime Minister to state to the house whether the present situation has the full consent and approval of the British government. If it has, then I am content.

With respect to representation in Latin American countries, I suggest to the right hon. gentleman that in war time, and having regard to the huge war appropriation bill which is now before the house and all that it involves, he should give pause before he embarks on a spending campaign for the purpose of establishing diplomatic relations with the south American republics, unless it be that he visualizes the day when we shall join the pan-American union and the north American axis.

The establishment of Canadian legations in the Argentine and Brazil will not be an important contribution to our war effort. It will be no contribution at all, and that is what matters at the moment. I doubt if it will be even an important contribution to our trade efforts with those countries. A trade mission to these countries, or a representative located in the capital of each of them, could and would do a great deal of good for Canada's export trade; but I have never yet learned that Canada's trade was in any way furthered by the appointment of a diplomatic representative. I have urged from the beginning the appointment of some sort of trade mission to these countries, but so far nothing has been done except the minister's visit last winter, which, unfortunately, was more or less abortive because of his illness.

It was upon the theory that Canada's material as well as diplomatic interests would be greatly enhanced with Japan that we set up a legation there. The former occupant of that position impressed upon me personally the desirability of his being knighted so that he would have a higher status and could do more for Canada's trade with Japan. He had his way and was knighted, but I never heard that it was a very effective proposal from the point of view of trade. The Prime Minister suggests that trade commissioners do not have direct access to governments. That is true, but I suggest that that is not the vital and essential point. What is vital and what is essential is the fact that trade commissioners do have access to business men for the sale