

ment, and the British Government conceded it in principle under the Act of 1840. But when it came to the practical application they flinched at the issue, and they had strong support from a very influential body of opinion in Canada, who represented the very best classes of the people, but who happened to be quite wrong on this particular question, though they were quite sure that they were right. I think that it is the people who have all along been perhaps suspect in their imperialism who have kept the British empire together. The objection of the British government to responsible government was put in a form which could not be answered and never has been answered—How can a British governor be responsible and obedient to a locally elected legislature if its policy should differ from the policy of the imperial government which he represents? There was no answer logically and when finally, after ten years of turmoil, the British government threw up its hands and sent Lord Elgin out here with instructions, not as in the case of his predecessors not to recognize responsible government, but to accept it in its fullest terms, it was accepted in England as a matter of course that it was the prelude to the early separation of Canada from England.

Sir Wilfred Laurier, in a speech on imperial questions, said that the attitude of Canada towards England, say from 1850, for the next twenty years, was the attitude of Ruth: "Entreat me not to leave thee." Those were the days when a Prime Minister of England in the House of Commons—Lord John Russell—took great credit to himself because in making the colonies—and he was referring specially to Canada—fit for independence England would have the consolation of saying that she had contributed to the happiness of the world. Lord Elgin, who was Governor-General of Canada at the time, wrote a letter in which he made some very satirical remarks about this statement saying, "Wherefore this foreboding? I should be led to imagine that the prospect of these sucking democracies, after they had drained their old mother's life