

Mr. BELCOURT. I do not think that remark is quite candid. If there was so little in my speech, I wonder why hon. gentlemen opposite so often interrupted me and asked questions. The hon. gentleman (Mr. R. L. Borden), only a few moments ago, got up with his face white with rage. And yet he says there was nothing in my remarks. His earnest and very frequent interruption was one of the greatest compliments he could pay me.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I apologize.

Mr. BELCOURT. Now, Mr. Speaker, what is the lesson that stands out most clearly in this controversy? Is it not the lesson that in this country appeals to race and religious prejudice, to passion, to intolerance, though they may yield some temporary advantage, yet, in the long run, are bound to re-act against those who resort to them? Is it not the lesson that in this country government is possible only by tolerance, by conciliation, by fair and honourable compromise? To this policy the right hon. gentleman (Sir Wilfrid Laurier) who leads this House, early in his public career, devoted himself; to this policy he has steadfastly adhered; and of this policy he is the most distinguished and successful exponent in this country. His faithful devotion to this ideal, and his masterly application of the principle have made him the beloved and idolized leader of his party and have won for him the respect and admiration of all Canadians, including, I believe, his opponents, and have won for him no less the respect and admiration of the whole British empire. Before I close, I would like to quote to the House a passage taken from one of Burke's immortal speeches, covering, to my mind, a most significant and pregnant statement of the present situation in Canada:

All government, indeed every human benefit, every virtue and every prudent act is founded on compromise and barter. We balance inconveniences, we give and take; we remit some rights, that we may enjoy others; and, we choose rather to be happy citizens, than subtle disputants. As we must give away some natural liberty to enjoy civil advantages, so we must sacrifice some civil liberties and advantages to be derived from the communion and fellowship of a great empire. But in all dealings the thing bought must bear some proportion to the purchase paid. None will barter away the immediate jewel of his soul. None of us who would risk his life rather than fall under a government purely arbitrary. But, although there are some amongst us who think our constitution wants improvements to make it a complete system of liberty, perhaps none who are of that opinion would think it right to aim at such improvement by disturbing his country and risking everything that is dear to him.

Mr. Speaker, on these lines, and on these lines only, with these ideals and principles,

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and with these alone, can His Majesty's government in Canada be carried on. On these lines only can the people of different races and different creeds who inhabit British North America continue to live at peace, in harmony and good-will. On these lines only, and with such conduct only, can we develop ourselves into the nation we ought to be in the time to come. On these lines only, Mr. Speaker, can we accomplish the high destiny to which Providence has called us.

Mr. R. S. LAKE (Qu'Appelle). Mr. Speaker, it has been said on several occasions lately that this House is now dealing with the most important question that has ever come before it. May I go a little further and say that this is a great occasion in the history of the British colonial empire? Britain's greatest colony is proposing to give a constitution to one of her own colonies. And, while I do not presume that there is any analogy between the powers which the mother country exercises in relation to her Crown colonies and the powers exercised by the Dominion in relation to the Northwest, still there is sufficient resemblance between the two to make it a matter of interest to observe the spirit in which Canada deals with her colony as compared with the spirit which has been shown by the mother country in dealing with her colonies, and with Canada herself especially. I ask that the same spirit which has been shown by the mother country in dealing with Canada shall be shown by Canada in dealing with her own colonies. I am afraid, Mr. Speaker, the exhibition which we have seen to-night takes away a good deal of the hope which I might have cherished. I hope we may calm down a little as this discussion proceeds. What we are doing is being watched outside of Canada, and will have an influence far beyond our boundaries. I desire to acknowledge in a few words the welcome which the hon. member for Ottawa (Mr. Belcourt) extended to the new provinces on joining the Canadian family circle. But I would remind him that the Territories are full-grown, and as such they feel themselves entitled to the full rights of manhood. If they are denied these rights, the relations within the family circle will be exceedingly unsatisfactory.

I am afraid I must spend some little time in going back into the history of this question. The matter which we have now before us was first brought prominently to the front on May 2nd, 1900. The first step in the movement was taken in the legislative assembly of the Northwest Territories on that day, when a memorial was addressed to the Governor General in Council asking that this matter be dealt with. In November of that same year a Dominion general election was held. In December, 1901, at the invitation of the Dominion government, a conference took place between a sub-committee of the Privy Council and the repre-