

Mr. DEAKIN : Then it was said : " If that is good for the Colonies it is good for us."

Twelfth Day.
7 May 1907.

Mr. LLOYD GEORGE : It was said under pressure.

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Mr. DEAKIN : The people who influenced Mr. Chamberlain said, " You are doing something for the Colonies by means of duties; had not you at the same time better do something for us?"

Mr. LLOYD GEORGE : That was their view.

Mr. DEAKIN : That is a perfectly legitimate view, but if it applies to him, as far as I understand your argument and that of your colleagues it does not apply to you. You and those in agreement with you do not think these duties are going to benefit the Colonies. If you give them at all it would be a concession of a more or less sentimental character. Hence, if you think they will not benefit the Colonies you will not think it will benefit your own people.

Mr. LLOYD GEORGE : To put it frankly, no doubt a duty on corn and meat would be unpopular. I do not suppose anybody in this country would controvert that proposition for a moment on the other side.

Mr. DEAKIN : That is if it was sufficient to raise prices.

Mr. LLOYD GEORGE : Well, the reluctance with which the Conservative party have taken up even the 2s. duty is the best proof of that. And Mr. Chamberlain, he being the astutest politician we probably have seen in my time in this country, saw at once he could not get the country to take that pill without gilding it with something else. That is what it means. I am sure the people in this country would never look at the idea of a duty on corn or meat unless they become Protectionists on general grounds, and want to exclude foreign manufactures.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER : Do you think there is any use in protracting this discussion?

Mr. DEAKIN : Beyond the fact that it is very interesting, I do not know that it would help the immediate purpose before us. But I do not want to shrink from any question the Minister wishes to put, and to meet, as best my poor resources will allow, any argument he submits. Our difficulty, of course, is, and I think the Minister most amply recognised it yesterday, that we each start with certain pre-suppositions, whether derived from experience or education, and are always coming back to them. We have neither time here nor the means to get at those and deal with them finally. It is always an engagement of outposts which we are maintaining. We cannot get at the heart of the question in a meeting under the pressure that exists here.

My excuse for having addressed the Conference again to-day, is that I was not willing that an address so forcible and so well put as that of the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies should pass without criticism from our point of view. My general answer to his thesis is summed up in the proposition that he is like the medical man who confines his patient to an invalid chair because, if he takes exercise or performs his natural duties, he runs a risk of complications, of catching cold, of all kinds of diseases and imaginable physical accidents. I admit his aim. If you can get the British