

Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL : May I say that I did not know that Mr. Deakin was to raise this particular point, or I should have refreshed my memory by a closer study of the facts; but, so far as I recollect, the authority stated by me was Sir Everard im Thurn, our High Commissioner in the New Hebrides, who reported to us that the Australian tariff had injuriously affected British colonization in the New Hebrides. I think that has been published.

Fourteenth Day.
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Mr. DEAKIN : It is published.

Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL : I think the authority on which I made my statement which is, of course, only a general acceptance of the facts contained in the question——

Mr. DEAKIN : I am not quite sure that we had his Report before this; but the point is this: that directly we saw it we challenged it at once by despatch. It was the unintentional misrepresentation of a gentleman recently appointed, who had only paid one visit to the group, and was extremely unfamiliar with a great many of its details.

Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL : It is perfectly open to Mr. Deakin, with the resources of the Australian Government at his disposal, to differ from the view of the facts which was taken by this Government, with such resources as we have at our disposal.

Mr. DEAKIN : Still there are the facts, we had proposed a preference. The implication in both question and answer is that we have done nothing to lighten our tariff, whereas we had not only referred the case of the New Hebrides to our Tariff Commission (that is, of course, a matter of our internal politics, as to which you need not have any knowledge), but we have also been in correspondence with you to discover whether it was not possible for us to give a preference to these particular settlers on these very products.

Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL : Since when?

Mr. DEAKIN : I read the correspondence at yesterday's meeting, but have not brought it to-day. I read that correspondence and the telegrams yesterday that were sent to us saying that we could not discriminate. Then we asked them about the discrimination to French nationals in New Caledonia.

Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL : The report was to the effect that the tendency of the tariff over a long period of years had been prejudicial to the development of British settlements in the New Hebrides. It is quite clear that anything done in the last year or eighteen months would not have affected the substantial truth or justice of that conclusion, although I quite agree from the point of view of the Australian Government if a movement had been made, it was desirable that it should have been stated. I say at once that if I had known it, I would have stated it.

Mr. DEAKIN : Of course you would, but the statement which was made was wrong, and that which you are now repeating is wrong again. New South Wales never had a closed port, and the business of the New Hebrides