

Sir JOSEPH WARD—*cont.*

they have no voice and no recognition. I fully recognise that the British authorities at any time of the kind would always do what they believed to be right for Great Britain and the oversea Dominions, but if the fact of their being in a minority upon the Executive Council is to be put forth as a reason for not urging a proposal of the kind, because they would be outvoted by the British authorities, personally I do not quite see its force.

I prefer to have a voice individually even where I am in a minority of one, and have been opposed by the whole of the others; I prefer to have that voice and to recognise that my country spoke through me for what it was worth rather than not have a voice at all.

The PRESIDENT: You are enjoying that experience now.

Sir JOSEPH WARD: I am enjoying it in a practical sense, and I recognise that perhaps might be the position upon such a body as I have suggested.

Now, I also want to say—I thought I did say so in the course of my remarks, but I may not have done so—with reference to the reply made by Mr. Asquith to those gentlemen to whom he referred to-day, that the unanimous consent of the Dominions themselves would be necessary before those countries would have a representation in connection with matters of vital importance to them and affecting them, that I recognise the practical side of the view taken by Mr. Asquith in that respect, and that nothing that is done by me at this Conference so far as New Zealand is concerned will be put into operation without the Parliament of the country itself approving of it. I also wish to express the opinion that I am not at all sure that it is to be expected at either this Conference or future Conferences that matters of moment to any portion of the overseas Dominions should come from the overseas Dominions' representatives themselves. I have no doubt that the British Government through the distinguished gentleman at its head could make proposals bearing on this matter satisfactory to the British people and possibly satisfactory to the oversea Dominions which would give effect in practical form to what I have been endeavouring to achieve, and I should not like to see the limitation of proposals of that kind restricted to the unanimous approval of the whole of the oversea Dominions before their acceptance could be undertaken by the Conference itself.

I want to express my appreciation of the cordiality of the criticism, although adverse to the proposals, that have been made by the Conference, and like all British subjects, I accept the decision of the majority with perfect equanimity.

Mr. BATCHELOR: I would like to suggest to Sir Joseph that the form in which he has brought this matter forward renders it necessary for us now in voting on the resolution to vote on a resolution which is put without discussion. This resolution which you have here, of course, has not been discussed at all; it is quite a different proposition. The proposition here is totally different from the one, I think, which has been discussed up to the present. That was an Advisory Council on all questions as against an Imperial Parliament of Defence; so that we are really, in rejecting this resolution, rejecting it wholly without discussion.

The PRESIDENT: It was pointed out by Sir Wilfrid Laurier that that was so. I do not know whether Sir Joseph Ward wishes to have a division on the resolution as it stands, or whether he thinks the discussion has served its purpose.

Sir JOSEPH WARD: If I understand my friend Mr. Batchelor is prepared to support this resolution as it stands——

The PRESIDENT: He did not say that.

Mr. BATCHELOR: I would like to hear some discussion upon it.

Sir EDWARD MORRIS: It appears to me the debate will show that clearly.