

"This House, therefore, expresses the hope and desire that his Majesty's government will endeavor to conclude in South Africa an honorable peace founded in the law questions, which guarantees independence to all civilized people, and upon the true British traditions of respect to all national and religious convictions and to the spirit of colonial autonomy."

If this means anything it means that we are to invite the British authorities to restore the two republics, the South African Republic and the Orange Free State, to their independence. My honorable friend will not deny that this is the meaning that he has in his mind, but, strange to say, he never said a word as to that proposition.

I would have expected him to deal at length with this point which, after all, was a noble, worthy subject to consider, and which, after all, might invite discussion. I would have expected him to give his reasons and arguments why the British authorities should be invited by the Canadian Parliament to undo what they have done and to restore to the two republics the independence which they forfeited on the 9th of October, 1899. My honorable friend did not speak a word upon that subject, and, sir, perhaps I might sit down and not utter another syllable upon this subject, and I would do so and not utter another syllable upon the subject, were it not for the fact that my honorable friend in some of his arguments has been so unjust, so unfair, to the British government that I feel constrained to place before the House the other side of the question.

If he means anything, he means this: that the two republics, the republic of South Africa and the republic of the State of Orange, should be restored to their independence, should be restored to the position they occupied on the 9th of October, 1899, that the supreme arbitrament of war which

they themselves invoked should be satisfied; that all the blood which had been shed should count for nothing; that all the suffering which has been endured should be forgotten, and that Mr. Kruger and Mr. Steyn should be restored to the position of which they made such an abuse.

My honorable friend spoke eloquently of the miseries of war, of the destruction of farms, of the burning of houses, and I agree with him. I take no exception to what he said in that respect. Miserable, indeed, is the condition to-day of the once proud South African Republic; miserable by reason of its ruined farms, its closed mines, its cities arrested in their growth, its people impoverished, and its aged president a fugitive in Europe, a fugitive from the misery which he brought upon his own country. Miserable, indeed, is the condition of the once happy State of Orange, which had no quarrel with Great Britain, but which was precipitated into the horrors of war and of invasion by the man to whom it had entrusted its destinies, himself to-day a self-constituted outlaw in his own country.

These men appealed to the God of battles, and the God of battles has pronounced against them. They invaded British territory, their territory was invaded in turn, and it was annexed to the British domain in consequence of the terrible logic of war. If I understand him aright to-day, he would have the government and Parliament of Great Britain undo what has been done and bring the rebellious Boers back to the position which they occupied on the 9th of October, 1899, and which they had forfeited.

My answer is a very simple one. Whether he will agree with me or not, I am sure everybody else will agree that in the terrible uncertainties of war, in the series of successes and reverses which generally make up the history of war, the

leader of the defeated people has no right to complain if he receives from his victorious opponent the same treatment which he had previously applied to his opponent in the hour of victory.

Now he knows very well that when Lord Roberts invaded the State of Orange and raised the British flag in Bloemfontein, and when subsequently he invaded the Transvaal and again raised the British flag in Pretoria, and when he annexed the State of Orange and the Transvaal to the British Dominions, he knows very well that Lord Roberts then and there applied to the vanquished the very same law which had been proclaimed as a law of war by the Boers in the first stages of that war.

Sir, he is aware that the following day the State of Orange, which had no quarrel with England, joined hands with the Transvaal Republic, and that President Steyn called upon the Free State burghers to stand shoulder to shoulder against what he called the oppressor. My honorable friend is aware that that very same day the Boers invaded the British Colony at Natal; that within the following week they invaded several other places, they invaded Newcastle, Laing's Nek, and Honing Spruit.

He is aware also that within a week of that time the Free State burghers invaded the British colony of the Cape, that they occupied no less important a place than the district of Kimberly; and that by a series of proclamations, which I have here, from the commandants of the invading army, they annexed the district of Kimberly and the State of Orange.

Well, sir, these things took place in the beginning of the war. He pities to-day and laments the condition of the Dutch citizens. Sir, I have here in my hand the evidence of British subjects in the district of Kimberly, who were forced

to serve in the Dutch army, and when they appealed to President Kruger, were told that the district of Kimberly henceforth would be part of the State of Orange.

I will quote for the information of the House upon this subject a most suggestive affidavit which has appeared in the last bluebook of this subject and which I think he will agree with me affords a justification to the British government for all that they have done.

Well, sir, those were the first stages of the war. But the tide turned. The Boers who invaded British territory were repulsed and their own territory was invaded and annexed to the British territory. They again invaded British territory and were again repulsed. Now, I ask what injustice can the Boers urge against the British government when the British government treated them exactly as they had treated British subjects and British territory? What injustice can they urge in receiving exactly the same treatment as they had meted out to their opponents when they were in the ascendant? Mr. Speaker, I believe that there was logic in the method followed by the burghers. In the opening stages of the war they laid down the principle that South Africa has to be either Dutch or British, and the verdict of the God of armies has been that it should not be Dutch, but that it should be British. I could go on multiplying these examples.

Let me give another argument. If I understood him aright, and I think I did, in that respect, he would like the British government to go back to the policy of Mr. Gladstone in 1881. Mr. Gladstone was magnanimous toward the Boers in 1881, magnanimous, perhaps, to a fault. When he had the Boers in his power he treated them with the greatest generosity, expecting that when they had British subjects in their power they would treat them with the same generos-

ity. That was a mistake. He measured the men with whom he had to deal with the measure of his own great soul. If magnanimity be a fault, and if that was a fault with Mr. Gladstone, everybody must admit that magnanimity has never been a fault of Mr. Kruger.

If Mr. Kruger had had the slightest amount of the magnanimity of Mr. Gladstone there would have been no war. If Mr. Kruger had shown toward British subjects the principles of justice, there would have been no war. If Mr. Kruger had simply kept his pledge toward Mr. Gladstone and his commissioner there would have been no war.

What are the facts upon this question? They must be recalled in the face of the speech we have heard to-day from the member for Labelle. In 1881, when the Boers had gone to war against England, and, after their ephemeral success at Majuba Hill, the government of Mr. Gladstone filled the country with British troops. Lord Roberts was ready to take the field, and the issue could not have been in doubt, but Mr. Gladstone, in his great soul, resolved to give the Boers another chance, to give them their independence, retaining only for the British Crown suzerainty. Commissioners were appointed to settle the terms of peace.

The commissioners were Sir Hercules Robinson, Chief Justice de Villiers, a Boer of French descent. Like my friend and myself, he is of Huguenot descent. The third commissioner was Sir Evelyn Wood. This commission had to settle the terms of peace, and the terms of peace implied the independence of the Transvaal, and the independence of the Transvaal implied that there were British subjects who would become Dutch citizens. Naturally the commissioners were anxious as to what should be the position of these British subjects under the new régime. And naturally the

British commissioners negotiated upon this point. There were negotiations and Mr. Kruger was questioned as to what would be the fate of the British subjects who then became Dutch citizens, and here is the answer which was given by Mr. Kruger:

Sir Hercules Robinson, addressing himself to Mr. Kruger, said: "Before annexation, had British subjects complete freedom of trade throughout the Transvaal? Were they on the same footing as citizens of the Transvaal?"

Mr. Kruger. "They were on the same footing as the burghers; there was not the slightest difference, in accordance with the Sand River Convention."

Sir Hercules Robinson. "I presume, you will not object to that continuing?"

Mr. Kruger. "We make no difference as far as burgher rights are concerned. There may, perhaps, be some slight difference in the case of a young person who has just come into the country."

That was on the 10th of May, 1881, and a few days later, on the 26th of May, Dr. Jorissen explained what was meant by a young person: "According to our law, a newcomer has not his burgher rights immediately. The words 'young person' do not refer to age, but to the time of residence in the republic. According to our old Grondwet, you had to reside a year in the country."

There, you see, all the rights of citizenship were reserved for British subjects and a residence of one year was enough to entitle them to these rights. But he knows that this pledge given by Mr. Kruger was not kept, that the rights of British subjects were abridged, that the period of probation which prevailed at that time was extended from one year to five years. Naturally this caused a great deal of comment and of complaint on the part of the men who had gone into the Transvaal, at the instance, afterward, of Mr. Kruger, to de-

velop the country, who were taxed mercilessly, who founded cities over which they had no control whatever, and who, when they asked for the privileges of citizenship, were told that they would not have any. It is no wonder that the best men in the Transvaal and in South Africa protested against that treatment.

My honorable friend has laid the blame of the war upon Mr. Chamberlain and the British government. It is not part of my duty to defend Mr. Chamberlain, who has shown that he can take care of himself upon every occasion. It is not part of my duty to defend the British government, but I may say to my honorable friend with all frankness—and he knows the great friendship that I have for him—that, notwithstanding that friendship, the attitude which he has taken is so unfair and unjust to the British government that I deem it my duty to place the facts which he had left to oblivion when he brought that question up before the House.

Who is responsible for the war, I deplore it as much as he does, but I ask him again: Who is responsible for the war? Is it the government of Great Britain? Sir, the man who is responsible for the war is Mr. Kruger himself. He was the President of the South African Republic. A great deal of light has been shed upon the Transvaal question by the correspondence found at Pretoria after its occupation by Lord Roberts. Among the ablest men in South Africa to-day is Sir Henry de Villiers, chief justice of Cape Colony. Amongst this correspondence letters written by Sir Henry de Villiers proved that in the summer of 1899, when negotiations were going on between Mr. Kruger and Mr. Chamberlain, Sir Henry de Villiers went almost on his knees to Mr. Kruger to induce him to make concessions to the Outlanders.

This is a letter which he wrote on the 21st of May, 1899,

addressed to Mr. Steyn, President of the Orange Free State. He goes on to say, and I call the attention of the House to this part of Sir Henry de Villiers's letters:

“I am quite certain that if in 1881, it had been known to my fellow commissioners that the President would adopt his retrogressive policy, neither President Brand (Orange Free State) nor I would have induced them to consent to sign the convention. They would have advised the secretary of state to let matters revert to the condition in which they were before peace was concluded; in other words to recommence the war.”

I ask the honorable member for Labelle to-day: Is not the conduct of the British government justified when Chief Justice de Villiers, himself a Boer, told President Steyn in 1899 that if he had conceived, when he was acting as peace commissioner in 1881, that Mr. Kruger would so abuse the power vested in him, that, instead of advising the independence of the Transvaal, he would have advised the British government to go to war again? There never was a greater justification of the policy maintained by the British government than this letter of Chief Justice de Villiers.

I could go on multiplying these letters. There are four or five published in the same book, which I have now in my hands. But I will give simply the letters of a man who is a friend of the Boers, Mr. Merriman, a member of the government of Mr. Schreiner, himself an Afrikander of extreme views. In 1888 Mr. Merriman wrote to President Steyn in these words:—

“I sometimes despair of the peace of South Africa when I see how irritating and unjust the press is on the one side and how stubborn the Transvaal government is on the other. On my recent visit to Pretoria, I did not visit the President, as I considered it hopeless to think of making any impression

on him, but I saw Reitz, Smuts, and Schalkburgher, who, no doubt, would be amenable to argument, but I fear that either my advice had no effect on them, or else their opinion had no weight with the President. I urged upon them to advise the President to open the Volksraad with promises of a liberal franchise and drastic reforms. It would have been so much better if they had come voluntarily from the government instead of being gradually forced from them. In the former case they would rally the greater number of the malcontents around them; in the latter case no gratitude will be felt to the Republic for any concessions made by it. Besides there can be no doubt that as the alien population increases, as it undoubtedly will, their demands will increase with their discontent and ultimately a great deal more will have to be conceded than will now satisfy them. The franchise proposal made by the President seems to be simply ridiculous.

"One cannot conceal the fact that the great danger to the future lies in the attitude of President Kruger, and his vain hope of building up a state on a foundation of a narrow, unenlightened minority and his obstinate rejection of all prospects of using the materials which lie ready to his hand, to establish a true republic on a broad, liberal basis. The report of recent discussions in the Volksraad on his finances and their mismanagement fill one with apprehension. Such a state of affairs cannot last; it must break down from inherent rottenness, and it will be well if the fault does not sweep away the freedom of all of us."

If the Republics had not made the fatal mistake of sending the ultimatum when they did, things would have gone differently; but it is no use going back on what might have been. There was the mistake. It was the sending of this fatal ultimatum which brought all these calamities upon the Boers, which Mr. Bourassa deplores now. Let me tell him that the responsibility for this does not lie upon any other head than on the head of the President of the Transvaal Republic, who has been the first victim of his own doings. And notwith-

standing all his faults, and notwithstanding that he has brought all this on his own head, considering his great age, I cannot help feeling for Mr. Kruger a great deal of sympathy.

Mr. Bourassa deprecates the war. I do not deprecate it as much as he does, but I believe, perhaps, it is the greatest calamity which has befallen England within the last forty years or so, because it places on England the burden and the duty of governing South Africa with its two races estranged, perhaps for generations, by the cruel memories of war.

The problem of South Africa is this:—That you have in that country two races so mixed and so intermingled that it is not possible to separate them. These two races must be governed by the same power and the same authority and that power has either to be the power of England or the power of the Dutch. It has either to be the liberal and enlightened civilization of England of to-day, or the old bigoted and narrow civilization of the Dutch of two hundred years ago.

Let Mr. Bourassa forget for a moment that he and I are British subjects: and in the name of civilization, in the name of humanity, I ask him which is the power that ought to govern in that distant land? Is it the enlightened power of England or is it the semi-barbarous civilization of the Dutch?

There is but one future for the Dutch. They have been conquered, but I pledge my reputation and name as a British subject that if they have lost their independence they have not lost their freedom.