

new consciousness. It permeates and sours our whole outlook in regard to Imperial relationship. It derives impetus from the natural inclination to take pride in being a member of the biggest Commonwealth that the world knows to-day. It makes the task of the Government of India, of which I had the honour of being a member until a few months ago, infinitely more difficult in dealing with their domestic problems than you realize. Here I must reinforce the arguments of Lord Peel. This feeling runs right through our national life.

Feeling over Kenya Question.

Let me at once tell you that I am not willing to enter at length into the merits of the Kenya decision, but my countrymen expect me, and my Government expects me, and I am bound by all considerations of honour and duty, to put you in full possession of the sentiments of my countrymen and of my Government in regard to your decision. They have received that decision with the utmost possible dismay. I know the official view is that in certain respects our position in Kenya has been improved. That is not a view we share. We judge you by a standard which is admittedly very high. We were not fighting for little things; we were fighting for a big principle. I know and I feel, and my countrymen feel, and my Government feels, that a serious blunder has been made. I know also that British statesmanship is wise, and whenever a thing goes wrong it begins to think, and I honestly believe that it will soon recognize the mistake which it has made. Let me tell you, on behalf of my countrymen, that neither my country nor the Government which I have the honour to represent will accept this decision as final. Indeed, there is nothing final in politics, and I want His Majesty's Government to recognize that position and to indicate, if possible, that they do look upon that question in the light in which I have just presented it. May I conclude this portion of my speech by assuring the Conference that while on domestic questions of Indian politics we, like most of you, have our differences of parties, groups, and interests, yet upon this question which concerns the honour of our nationals in Kenya, and the honour of our nationals overseas, there is no difference between us, from the Viceroy downwards.

Views of the Government of India.

May I remind you of what the distinguished and eminent statesman, with whom I had the privilege of working in close co-operation for two years, and to whom I hope my countrymen and his countrymen will do justice some day, said on a critical occasion to the Legislative Assembly when the announcement of the Kenya decision was published in India. I will quote from his speech: "The news of the decision regarding Kenya," said Reading, "came to me and my Government no less than to you as a great and severe disappointment; for India had made the cause of Indians in Kenya her own. As His Majesty's Government has stated, this decision conflicts on material points with the strongly expressed views of my Government as laid before the Cabinet by the Secretary of State for India." That is the opinion of the Viceroy.

Illustrations of Non-official Feeling.

May I crave your indulgence just for two minutes to read out to you a few typical telegrams which I have received during the last few days, some of them from absolutely unexpected quarters. They have come to me from representative bodies of all shades of opinion. Mr. Sastri, who has been so frequently, during the last few years, connected with this matter, sends me a telegram supporting the proposals, not without misgivings, which I am going to put before you at present. Now, the Swaraj party, to which I do not belong, and which does not see eye to eye with me, and from which I should never have expected to receive support, sends this telegram from Poona, through its secretary and leader, Mr. Kilkar: "Maharashtra Swarajya party offers you full support any strong action you take to get redress Kenya wrong." Let me tell you again that most of the telegrams come from unexpected quarters.

Unexpected Testimony.

Well, here is a most remarkable telegram from a gentleman with whom I worked in full co-operation until five years ago, but from whom I separated when differences arose. Pandit Madan Mohon Malaviya now belongs to the non-co-operation party, and three days ago, if you would have asked me, I should never have said that I would receive a telegram like this from that gentleman. It is from a man with forty years' solid work behind him, and this is his telegram. It is sent to me from Simla: "Indians all shades public opinion at one with you in demanding equality status with fellow-subjects throughout British Empire. If representatives other parts not prepared give practical support this elementary right Indians as citizens Empire, participation Indians Imperial Conference becomes mockery, deep national humiliation, and trust both you and Maharajah of Alwar will withdraw."

I have received two telegrams from Mrs. Besant, giving support to me on her own behalf and on behalf of her entire party. Let me tell you that while I am her friend I do not belong to her party.

Telegram from Government of India.

Lastly, may I give to you the telegram which was handed over to me the day before yesterday, which has come to me from the Government of India. It says: "We understand from Reuters that Conference will discuss overseas questions probably on 24th. The resolution passed recently by a majority of the Bombay Corporation to boycott Empire goods, where possible, as a protest against the Kenya decision, and a resolution on the same lines of the Poona public meeting, further indicate the importance attached to equality of status overseas, and we sincerely hope that the proceedings of the Conference will restore confidence and good feeling. As regards 'C' mandates, we trust that the atmosphere will permit you to secure a favourable solution, otherwise India's right to revision