



MINISTÈRE
DE L'ÉDUCATION
NATIONALE

EAE ANG 2

SESSION 2019

AGREGATION CONCOURS EXTERNE

Section : LANGUES VIVANTES ÉTRANGÈRES
ANGLAIS

COMMENTAIRE DE TEXTE EN ANGLAIS

Durée : 6 heures

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[...] In short, this Resolution represents the growing general opinion in the Empire from Scotland to New Zealand in favour of disentanglement of all local and national from Imperial affairs. On the eve of a third effort to deal with the case of Ireland in this House we invite the House to resolve that the delegation of powers from this House to subordinate legislatures is essential to the good government of each division of the United Kingdom, as well as to the unity and security of the Empire as a whole. We ask the Government to definitely recognise that in dealing with Ireland, as they are bound to do in this Session, and as we are going to back them in doing, that they are taking the first step in a policy which they have to complete if they can in this Parliament, at least so far as Scotland is concerned, when like provision for England and Wales must automatically follow. No doubt it seems less simple here than it does in the Oversea Dominions to effect a delegation of powers, yet in 1880 Mr. Gladstone struck the keynote of our policy when he said that: We have an over-weighted Parliament, and if in time any part of the United Kingdom was so able to re-arrange its affairs as to withdraw the local part of its transactions from the hands of Parliament, which would liberate and strengthen the Parliament for Imperial concerns, he would zealously support that policy.

Since then we have tried many devices towards that end. In 1884 Scotland combined upon the Scottish Office policy as a possible solution. Its failure through twenty-five years is alone a strong reason in favour of Scottish national self-government. Throughout our heated Irish controversies of that time the need for devolution was recognised by nearly all parties. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham [Mr. J. Chamberlain] urged National Councils all round. Lord Salisbury proposed a Provincial Council for Ireland. Lord Randolph Churchill brought to an end Lord Spencer's Administration in Ireland. Lord Carnarvon conducted his private negotiations there. Men of all parties approved of Imperial Federation. The letters of "Pacifcus" have been the most recent contribution from the Unionist party towards the same end. These various proposals were supported by various arguments; yet, looking back over past years, it is apparent that one dominant purpose runs through them all, namely, to relieve the overloaded Parliamentary machine and to disentangle local and national affairs from those which naturally fall within the sphere of an Imperial Parliament. If there was need then, there is tenfold greater need now. I admit that definite proposals, giving legislative effect to a policy so widely received, were limited to a Bill dealing with Ireland alone. But at the Home Rule elections in Scotland in 1886, 1893, and 1895, while Scotland stood firm by Mr. Gladstone and the Irish cause, she insisted steadfastly on the retention of the Irish

representation in this House. And why? Because she instinctively felt that it insured federal development, in which she claimed a share.

35 Therefore it cannot be said that this revolution is inopportune or that it is an attempt to take advantage of Ireland's claim to press an inconsequent development. Nationalist Members have expressed their sympathy with us in return for the sympathy which we have given and shall continue to give to them. We as frankly accord their claim for priority as they will accord us our right of succession. [...]

Ronald MUNRO FERGUSON (Liberal MP for the constituency of Leith Burghs, Scotland), contribution to the debate on the Resolution "That, in the opinion of this House, any measure providing for the delegation of Parliamentary powers to Ireland should be followed in this Parliament by the granting of similar powers of self-government to Scotland as part of a general scheme of devolution." *Hansard*, "House of Commons debates: Scotland (Federal Government)", vol. 34, cols. 1454-55, 28 February 1912.

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