

bine to make concern for the security of Britain a deep-felt and powerful factor in the shaping of Canadian policy.

Any realistic survey of the Canadian scene will make it clear that these varying factors play their part in the shaping of opinion and policy in Canada. No one of them can be ignored. No one can be taken as the sole directing force. They do not necessarily conflict; they may increasingly work together. That depends on the special circumstances and on the policies of other countries than ours. That is why it is impossible in the case of our country, as of others, to give what some people seem to desire, a hard and fast statement in advance as to the action that will be taken in hypothetical future cases that may arise in this rapidly shifting world.

Within the limits I have indicated, a decision on each issue must be made. As I have said, it is for the government to recommend and for parliament to decide upon the course to follow. It is, however, objected that in some cases, and particularly in the event of another member of the British commonwealth, which in present conditions means the United Kingdom, being at war, parliament has no freedom to decide, that Canada is automatically a belligerent whenever the United Kingdom is. In some quarters it is further urged that assuming this to be true, we should, in order to make freedom of choice a reality, take formal steps here and now to remove any doubt on the matter, to make it clear to the world that Canada has the right to remain neutral, not a belligerent, whether passive or active, when the United Kingdom is at war.

The constitutional relationship of the several members of the commonwealth in the event of war is not a simple question. It is not one that can be determined by quoting detached phrases from resolutions or speeches.

Here I may take the opportunity to refer to obvious misrepresentations or misconceptions based on a reference I myself made in this house in the course of the debate on the address to a statement made by Sir Wilfrid Laurier on February 3, 1910, as follows:

If England is at war we are at war and liable to attack. I do not say that we shall always be attacked, neither do I say that we would take part in all the wars of England. That is a matter that must be guided by circumstances, upon which the Canadian parliament will have to pronounce and will have to decide in its own best judgment.

With regard to the use which has been made of this paragraph since it was quoted, I should like, first of all, to take strong exception to the failure, either accidental or deliberate, of some who have referred to it, to make use of the entire quotation and

thereby make clear exactly what was meant. In justice not less to the memory of Sir Wilfrid Laurier than to myself, I wish to take strong exception to divorcing a single sentence from the statement of which it is an integral part, and still stronger exception to deleting altogether a part of a single sentence, thereby giving to the remainder a meaning which was never intended.

When Sir Wilfrid Laurier used the expression: "If England is at war, we are at war and liable to attack," he was not propounding some political or constitutional theory with respect to the powers and limitations of the government or parliament of Canada in time of war. The remainder of the paragraph makes clear that the very opposite was what was in his mind. What he was seeking to make clear and what it is necessary should be made abundantly clear to-day, is the danger of attack upon Canada itself which is inseparable from an attack upon Britain by an aggressor. Sir Wilfrid Laurier wished to make clear to the Canada of his day, as I feel it equally my duty to make it abundantly clear to the Canada of the present day, that when for any reason there is cause to believe that one or more nations are determined upon aggression, and may have in mind domination of other countries by force, it may be that enemy, not the parliament of this country or even its people, who will decide whether it best serves its purpose to regard Canada as liable to attack in any conflict in which it may be engaged with any other part of the British commonwealth of nations.

My immediate purpose in quoting the statement, as will be apparent from the context, was to emphasize the continuity of Liberal policy as regards parliamentary control, the view which was held then and which we as a government hold to-day, that in the great as in the small issues of a nation's policy, the policy of self-government which we have followed for a century makes it essential that parliament and no other body should decide. If at that time I had been directing particular attention to that portion of Sir Wilfrid's remarks, to which I have just referred, I should have quoted, as indicating still more clearly the causal connection, between the two parts of that remark, a more explicit statement Sir Wilfrid had previously made in the same debate on January 12, 1910:

When Britain is at war, Canada is at war; there is no distinction. If Great Britain, to which we are subject, is at war with any nation, Canada becomes liable to invasion, and so Canada is at war.

This statement indicates that Sir Wilfrid's conclusion was based on two assumptions