

In whom are we to believe? If the words of the Prime Minister are to be taken literally, that when Great Britain is at war, Canada is at war, the foreign policy of Great Britain, whatever it may be, binds us to the extent that if the British foreign office decides upon war the decision applies to Canada *de jure* and *de facto*. That same policy propounded by the late Sir Wilfrid Laurier existed in 1889 and 1914. We have grown since, but we are not free, autonomous Canadians. We still remain colonials in the truest sense of the word. The two billion dollar war debt, the 70,000 brave Canadians buried in France, the 40,000 gallant veterans we have with us, have not earned for this country the right to decide for itself! In my opinion, this automatic commitment to war is the very negation of the autonomous dominion status we are supposed to enjoy. All the shouting that was done from the housetops during the 1926 general elections as to our sovereignty and autonomy, all the trumpet blasts and accompanying fanfare which greeted the statute of Westminster were mere shams. It does seem to me that in the domain of foreign affairs we are still little boys. It seems that we should be seen but not heard when it comes to the question of war.

We are told that parliament will decide. Decide what? What can this parliament decide if we are to be automatically at war? Is it to decide the extent of the participation? We all know what that would mean. There are no half-measures in war; if we are in it we shall be in it to win. There will again be high-powered propaganda and the imperialistic press shouting and calling for "the last man, the last dollar and the last cent." If hon. gentlemen would just recall some of the editorials and flamboyant front-page articles which appeared at the time of the Munich conference, they will easily understand what we may expect. Where will the Canadian voter be in all this? What voice will that body most concerned in war, the youth of this country, have in the matter? These two classes would not even be consulted. Parliament would decide. In my humble opinion this parliament cannot take upon itself the right to decide participation and extensive rearmament. The last general election was not fought on these issues, and the Canadian public has not expressed its opinion sufficiently for this parliament to know where it stands on these matters. If a state of national emergency is to exist; if this parliament is to engage this country in a future war, it should go immediately to the people and seek authority. Let us be frank and face the facts. Participation in a

[Mr. Héon.]

continental war will, whether we want it or not, be an issue at the next general election. It will most certainly be an issue in Quebec. I could not escape it in my own constituency even if I tried.

Colonialism or Canadianism! That will be the issue to be faced by most candidates in the forthcoming general election. I do not know what the verdict will be, but I refuse to think that colonialism is the regime under which the overwhelming majority of Canadians want to live to-day.

Sentiment must not be the deciding factor in an issue of this kind. There is not a single red-blooded Canadian who has any sympathy for nazism, fascism or the methods for which they stand. That is not the question. We must coolly and deliberately decide whether we shall forever mortgage this country's resources and man power, expend billions of dollars and sacrifice generations of Canadians for the benefit of those European governments which find it in their interest to enter into all sorts of secret agreements and manoeuvres for the balance of power. That is the question. Shall we become wedded to those intertangles for which European politics have become famous? Shall we assume responsibility for all the vagaries of continental diplomacy which we cannot ever hope to prevent and on the course of which we have never nor shall ever be properly consulted? That is the issue.

I want to make it clear before I terminate my remarks that I am not a pacifist in the narrow sense of the word. I believe it is our strict duty to make this autonomous yet component part of the commonwealth invulnerable to attacks and invasion. If this government has been reliably informed that some foreign power has cast a covetous eye on this territory, and if this information originates from authoritative and unimpeachable sources, then it is our immediate and sacred duty to proceed with the speediest, most complete and most efficient plan for the defence of our homeland. I do not infer that we should never take part in any war. What I say is that any war in which we do take part must be a war in which something better than sentiment actuated by prejudiced propaganda is at stake. It must be a war that threatens our very liberty, independence and existence, and the issue of which would be of immediate vital concern to all of us. I say, my country right or wrong, but not fifteen countries.

Mr. WILFRID LACROIX (Quebec-Montmorency): Mr. Speaker, in rising to speak on the address in reply to the speech from the throne I desire to congratulate the mover thereof (Mr. Matthews) and to cite the