

house suggest that we should supinely follow the policy of the United Kingdom in any matters of foreign concern. In fact the whole conference of 1926 was the negation of that. The Prime Minister said there was a certain class who accepted any policy of Great Britain, regardless of what it might be, and followed it blindly. Well, I have not seen any people of that sort in this country. In that regard I recall a communication sent to me by the late Sir Robert Borden containing a letter which he had received from the late Sir Austen Chamberlain. It was a very simple statement, but it embodies the very view that I have expressed so poorly. These were the words, and they were written in February, 1931:

If I allowed myself a further observation, it would be this. As regards the liberties and status of the Dominion of Canada you have achieved all that you set out to secure. But your policy had two sides—while insisting on the one side on the rights of Canada, you consistently coupled them with the duties and responsibilities which were inseparable from the exercise of those rights.

That again is but an expression on the part of a foreign secretary, to one who had been prime minister of this country, of the thought contained in those words "freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations."

I proceed a step further. That first class of persons to which reference has been made, who in peace or war would blindly follow any policy initiated by the United Kingdom, in my judgment are not to be found in this country; at least if they are, I have not come across them. Then there was the second class of persons to whom the Prime Minister referred, who accepted Great Britain's policy when it was within the principles of the League of Nations. I agree with what has been said in that regard by the Prime Minister, and I need not do more than say that when it was suggested that because all the dominions of the British Empire and India were, with Great Britain, members of the League of Nations, any action that might be taken looking toward conflict was action that could be taken only with the approval of the league, and therefore there was no further necessity for our giving great concern to our inter-imperial relations, since they were covered and governed by the provisions of the covenant of the league.

The third class referred to was the class that would consult and advise with Great Britain through the governments of the dominions and thus hope to be able to arrive at a common policy. Well, I think that is not an unsound view to take. I cannot but think that in view of what we said in 1926

it would be the essence of sound common sense that we, by kindly suggestion and by discussion antecedent to events, should arrive at a common policy with respect to matters touching the life itself of the British Commonwealth of Nations. I think most people believe that possible and desirable.

Then as the fourth class the Prime Minister suggested those who believe in the complete neutrality of this country. That raises an issue at once, sir, of tremendous import. The late Sir Wilfrid Laurier regarded that as hardly worth even discussing; for he held the view that when any part of the British Commonwealth of Nations was at war Canada also was at war. He expressed that view in this house in terms so clear as to admit of no possible doubt. How could this country be neutral and remain in free association with the other members of the commonwealth of nations? Yet it is to this free association that the Prime Minister very properly committed this country in 1926. It is to this that the house gave approval. It is this that parliament has accepted. How, sir, could you have anything such as the neutrality of Canada and a free association with the other members of the commonwealth, which includes the United Kingdom?

Then there was the fifth class of citizen to which reference was made, and that reference was summed up by the statement of the Prime Minister that parliament would govern. He said that we would keep in touch with the other dominions, but that parliament must determine these issues. If the view taken by Sir Wilfrid Laurier was a sound one—and it was a view which was accepted by constitutionalists in every part of the world—then, sir, this parliament would in such event be dealing with a reality, not a theory. For if war were to result by reason of difficulties between any of the other self-governing dominions or Great Britain and any other part of the world, then, as Sir Wilfrid pointed out, we also would be at war, and parliament would be dealing with an actuality, not a theory.

Mr. LAPOINTE (Quebec East): But he said more than that.

Mr. BENNETT: Yes, much more than that; but I am talking about what he said in this connection.

Mr. LAPOINTE (Quebec East): But that was not the whole sentence of Sir Wilfrid Laurier. He said, "but it does not follow that Canada will participate in any war."

Mr. BENNETT: I was just coming to that point, and I thank my right hon. friend