

British empire, and so on. What is perhaps even more important, we cannot declare neutrality and be independent, without throwing away the advantages of the British North America Act, with the minority rights, on religion, race and language, which that act gives to the people of this country.

The British North America Act is a British statute. It would go, it seems to me, unquestionably, if we declared independence. I think that should be emphasized. Those who maintain that we could be neutral should take the stand that they want independence in Canada. That is my opinion. If there are those who wish Canada to be independent of the empire, then they should say so. But I believe we should brush aside as impossible any other method of becoming neutral.

Let me ask this: Who, in all this country, want Canada's independence from the empire? I know of no large group anywhere which does not want to remain in the empire. If I remember rightly, only the other evening, right here in the House of Commons, the Minister of Justice rose in his place and in an eloquent manner told of our pride in remaining in the empire, and our desire to continue in it. I think I am not misquoting his expressed idea although I am not attempting to give his exact words. That, to my mind, is the attitude of practically everybody in Canada to-day. They are all proud to belong to the empire; they are all loyal to the king. I thought I had here some quotations by an hon. member of French-speaking ancestry. He spoke in the house the other evening and he made that loyal position very clear. Apparently I have mislaid his remarks, although I thought I had them in my papers. I believe that is the viewpoint of all thoughtful Canadians of French-speaking ancestry. As it is, I think, of all thoughtful Canadians of English-speaking ancestry. They want to remain part of this empire, loyal to our king.

It is confused thinking to propose any such thing as neutrality while yet remaining in the empire. To my mind it is not a legal question, and that is why I have attempted to offer my opinion upon it. It is not a question of legal hair-splitting or sophistry; it seems to me it is a question of common sense, justice and fair dealing toward the whole British commonwealth of nations. May I repeat that in a perhaps more concise form. I know of no considerable group in Canada which desires that Canada should not remain part of the empire. There is no doubt in my mind that while we are part of the empire, if Great Britain becomes engaged in war at any time, the enemies of Great Britain will consider themselves at war with Canada as well

as with other parts of the empire. Therefore, if Great Britain is at war, Canada is liable to attack and so we are also at war, whether we are attacked or participate in the war, which participation, of course, must be decided by the Canadian parliament.

In order to reinforce the ideas which I have expressed I am going to take the liberty of quoting a few authorities on this matter. First, I go back again to Sir Wilfrid Laurier's statement, which has been quoted so frequently in the house. It was quoted this afternoon by the Prime Minister; it has been quoted by myself, by my predecessor and by many others. In this instance I shall quote only the first sentence which Sir Wilfrid expressed in 1910: He said:

If England is at war we are at war and liable to attack.

I think that is clear-cut. I do not think there is any qualifying of that statement. It is true that participation is another matter, but as far as the position of all parts of the empire is concerned, it seems to me that is clear-cut and definite. I say again that has been repeated in this house by the Prime Minister, by the Minister of Justice, and by the Secretary of State. These hon. gentlemen are all on record in *Hansard* of 1937. So far as I can read their statements they are saying definitely and clearly that we cannot be neutral and remain in the empire. That seems to me to sum up the whole question. In other words, the enemy decides whether or not we shall be neutral. He will attack us if he is able, and he will conquer us if he can. That is the position. It is perfectly clear, and anyone who endeavours to take any other position, it seems to me is like the proverbial camel which attempts to put his head in the sand.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Ostrich.

Mr. MANION: That is a badly mixed metaphor. I shall turn back and say, "ostrich which attempts to put his head in the sand." Sometimes it is hard to distinguish between the intelligence of a camel and an ostrich.

Mr. LAPOINTE (Quebec East): One is just as stupid as the other.

Mr. MANION: Unfortunately the camel does not stick his head in the sand, whereas they say the ostrich does. I am not so sure that the ostrich is stupid enough to do that, although I was stupid enough to misquote both the camel and the ostrich. I suppose this will be held against me for the next twenty years. I think I shall cut it out of *Hansard*. If the editor of debates will permit me, I shall cut out a couple of pages at that spot.