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Room 1601, 50 King St. W.,
Toronto, January 12, 1954.

Sir Archibald Nye,
United Kingdom High Commissioner to Canada,
Farncliffe,
Ottawa, Ontario.

Dear Sir Archibald Nye:

Before me are your letters of 10th and 18th December. Having been lately, as indeed for years back, largely preoccupied with other than public affairs, I regret it has not been possible to address to you an earlier reply.

It is scarcely necessary to say that nothing in these documents has altered in the least degree my convictions which prompted the adverse representations made to you verbally on the conclusion of your speech at The Empire Club last November.

To ensure that this letter will be understandable without reference to others, I quote the portion of your speech which you have kindly submitted to me as that to which I took objection. It reads as follows:

"In 1903 Canada had in fact, if not completely in form, complete control over her internal affairs and over her trade with foreign countries. But Canada still had no control over her external relations, though her claim to be consulted on important issues of foreign policy had to some extent been recognised. Indeed, though it seems hard to believe now, there was no consultation with the then Dominion before the declaration of war with Germany in 1914."

To the first sentence no objection, of course, can be taken. To the second, it would be interesting if you would advise me just what practical control Canada enjoys today over what you describe as her "foreign policy" in respect of engaging or not engaging in war that she could not have exercised in 1914. At that time, in the apt words of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, when Britain was at war, Canada was at war; but Canada had, as between Britain and herself, the absolute right to determine the extent, if any, of her participation. She could stay out entirely if she wished, providing, of course, the enemy permitted. She can do the same today. What is the prohibition by which an enemy is now forbidden to lay war-like hands on a peace-professing Canada that did not bind such enemy in 1914?

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