

quite comprehend the remark of the honourable senator from Ottawa (Hon. Mr. Lambert), who has just spoken so eloquently, in which he said in effect that our only interest is in Canada. True, our first interest is in Canada. I should like to hear the honourable gentleman explain his point a little more fully. It is to our interest to save Canada, and in doing so it is also to our interest to save our British connection and the British Empire.

Hon. Mr. BALLANTYNE: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. BLACK: I should have liked my honourable friend to couple with his remarks a statement of the fact that we enjoy the favourable position which we do in Canada because of the British Empire. We have looked to and depended upon the British Empire for guidance, and I for one hope I shall not live to see the day when there is any severance between Canada and the British Empire. Whenever in our history Canada has been able to take a step forward, she has been encouraged by Downing Street to do so. If we have independence—and we have—it is because of Downing Street's desire that we should have it rather than of any demand we made upon Downing Street.

I for one hope that our position in the British Empire will be maintained throughout my life and the lives of my children and grandchildren, for to me Canada and the Empire are bound up indivisibly. If this country is to make any progress it must be made hand in hand with the British Empire. I do not visualize, I do not want to visualize, the separation of Canada from the Empire. I prefer to visualize a time when we shall be living in one political organization with the rest of the members of the British Commonwealth and our great neighbour to the south of us. I think we may reasonably look forward to that, and not to disintegration of the Empire.

While I am on my feet I want to say that the tenor of the speeches in the debate would indicate that our differences—which, after all, are on only one point—are perhaps the result of a misconception, and that this can be straightened out if we and all the people of the various provinces determine not to accentuate our respective viewpoints, but to do all we can to bring Quebec and Ontario, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia and all the other provinces into closer harmony with one another. If we proceed along that line we shall soon have no people referred to as French Canadians and English Canadians. I deprecate the use of these expressions. We are all Canadians.

Hon. Mr. DAVID: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. BLACK.

Hon. Mr. BLACK: Do not let us call any of our fellow citizens French Canadians. I do not refer to myself as an English or Scotch Canadian. We are all alike Canadians. We love our country. Let us serve it honestly and well.

Hon. J. A. CALDER: Honourable senators, I had not intended to say anything in this debate, because for many reasons I did not deem it necessary to do so.

It may be said, and I think truthfully, that Canada from coast to coast has had ample opportunity, and has taken advantage of it, to consider and decide the merits of the question now before us. I doubt very much whether I could add anything in any sense useful to the debate. A decision has been reached, and now there is nothing to do but give the Government the authority it needs. Nothing is to be gained by going over all these past differences of opinion.

If there is one thing I am delighted with to-day it is the temper of the discussion in this Chamber on the Bill. We have a very unfortunate situation in Canada at the present time. We all admit our people are divided, and that everything should be done that can be done to put an end to that disunity. I have my view, you have yours, as to what is the real basis for this difference of opinion. In my judgment it should never have existed at all. I do hope that all leaders in this country, quite apart from any political considerations whatever, will do everything in their power from now on to see that that disunity is brought to an end and not stirred up again.

One of my great difficulties—and the same was true back in 1917, when I became a member of the Government of that day—is how people differ in opinion at all on the one question that divides them to-day. Let us look at the situation on the 10th of September, 1939, when we declared war against Germany. I shall not follow the argument advanced by my honourable friend from Ottawa (Hon. Mr. Lambert), but I say Parliament did know, or should have known, exactly what it was doing. Parliament, speaking for the nation, declared war. What does war mean? It means fighting. Who has to do the fighting? Is it to be left to the choice of the individual? If a mistake was made in declaring war, that is an entirely different thing. If, when the British Government years ago decided to carry on a war in South Africa, the people of Canada took the view that some take now, I should not have objected.