

Father Ducatillon delivered a masterly lecture which he had entitled "Civilization, the true stake for which the war is being fought". After showing the part played by Christianity in the world's civilization, and the pagan programme which Naziism and communism have initiated, the distinguished cleric concluded as follows: "No one is justified in keeping aloof from the present conflict, since it is war for or against right, for or against culture, for or against civilization."

We have seen treaties broken, and nations invaded; in short, everything that has upheld civilization until now and everything that could ensure the security of nations has been trampled upon.

Just a few days ago, three neutral countries whose only fault was that they trusted in solemn covenants, fell victims to their good faith and were treacherously attacked. May I mention in particular the heroic Belgians, those martyrs of the last war, who are once again defending their land against that new invasion of barbarians.

Will any one say that we are not interested in all that? Will any one say that the wild beast which has broken loose upon the world does not constitute a danger for us? Will any one say that we can remain unconcerned about the fate of liberty and of those principles to which all free men have clung tenaciously for so many centuries?

For my part, I refuse to believe that my fellow citizens can stand by unconcernedly while these principles are engulfed in the surging tide of the abominable doctrines and practises of the Hitlerian and Soviet dictatorships. How can we remain neutral when this diabolic doctrine of "Might is right" threatens the entire world?

We believe in eternal justice and truth, twin beacons a passing cloud may dim momentarily, but which must reappear and shine forth with a sovereign radiance, to guide a civilization founded on Faith and Hope. Such are the truths we are committed to defend.

Now what would be for us the consequences of a German victory? I have never been, nor do I intend ever to become an ardent supporter of out-and-out imperialism. History teaches us that empires, being essentially the product of human enterprise, can never as such stand wholly free from imperfection. Yet I state without hesitation that at this critical moment in the lives of all nations, when the very existence of our democratic institutions is threatened, the dismemberment of the British Empire, as well as the defeat of France our ally, would be an irreparable catastrophe, opening wide the gates

[Mr. Hugues Lapointe.]

to all the subversive doctrines which are not without causing a certain degree of apprehension to the very ones who have made it fashionable, in certain circles, to denounce the present system. Everyone is aware that the dismemberment of the British Empire is one of the avowed war aims of the German Reich, and Hitler has never ceased to predict that the Empire would crumble the day war was declared in Europe.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I ask the hon. members of this house, I ask all my fellow citizens, would we not be deeply affected under the present circumstances by the consequences of such a dismemberment? What would become of us in the event of such a disaster? What would become of those who have, at the moment, nothing but criticism for the ties that bind us to England? Do they believe for a second that a victorious Germany would pay little heed to Canada with her immense resources and wealth? Do they believe that we Canadians, a small nation of some ten million people, occupying a territory five times the size of France, could safeguard the freedom and autonomy we enjoy to-day? Do they believe, especially, that we could long maintain our racial characteristics, our mentality, our liberty and our faith?

I am aware that numerous hypotheses have been advanced with regard to the consequences of an enemy victory. Some have claimed that in such circumstances there could only accrue a greater measure of autonomy to our country because, they allege, our neighbours to the south would never permit a German invasion of Canada.

I do not share this opinion which is rather devoid of pride. It is undoubtedly true that there exist between Canada and the United States friendly relations which are extremely helpful to us in the present conflict. Our geographical position as well as our economic interests bind us strongly together. On the other hand, is there not reason to fear that these very factors may tend to weaken our position as a separate entity among the nations of the world and inevitably lead to a total absorption which, though preferable to German domination, would nevertheless mean the complete disappearance of everything Canadian? For my part, I confess that I would rather remain a good neighbour.

Mr. Speaker, the country has rallied to the leadership of a man who is sure of his ground, whose concern for our national interests is everywhere manifest and who is worthy of trust. Is it not therefore the duty of every patriotic citizen to give wholehearted support