

(2) The second alternative is that the Dominions should terminate the right of the Imperial government to declare war or peace on their behalf. And here again it is necessary to consider the precise steps which are necessary in order to effect this change. The Imperial government must of course be notified that it is no longer entitled to include the Dominions in a declaration of peace or war with a foreign power. But that of itself is not enough. It is of far greater importance that this notification should be made to foreign powers who are at least as directly concerned in learning the new condition of affairs as the Imperial government itself. The people of the Dominions thereafter would enter into direct relations with these powers through ministers of their own, who must send ambassadors to represent them and receive foreign ambassadors in return. The mutual reception of diplomatic agents is the accepted sign of a state of peace between independent powers. Their withdrawal or dismissal is the recognized form which a declaration of war inevitably takes. This second alternative is independence and of all the possible alternatives it is the clearest and easiest to state.

So far as Canadians are concerned there is of course the alternative of absorption in the United States, but to avoid misunderstanding let me say at once that I am including it under the heading of independence because I am using that word in its negative sense as meaning separation from the British Commonwealth. Here again the first necessary step would be a notification to foreign powers that Canadians were no longer involved in a declaration of peace or war on the part of the Imperial government at Westminster. That declaration having been once made it would cease to be an Imperial question at all whether Canadians desired to conduct