

Canada must remain neutral. As King told that story in his last days, Skelton argued that the surrender and hypocrisy of appeasement, from Ethiopia onward, had undermined all the moral purpose for which the war was ostensibly to be fought. Since no moral question was involved, Canada, like Ireland, should keep out. Being a North American nation, it might exercise some mediation in the course of a conflict morally chaotic". Hutchison goes on to relate, as it was told by Mr. King, how "for two days, with only Lapointe privy to their secret, King and Skelton wrestled with their consciences, in perfect amity and insoluble disagreement. At the end of the second day, Skelton was at last persuaded. After the travail of that lonely and honourable decision he never wavered again."<sup>(1)</sup>

Whether that version as to Dr. Skelton's views at the moment of the outbreak of war is a correct version, is unclear. Those who knew him, however, think that he accepted the necessity and decision for Canada's participation in the war only with the greatest reluctance, and that this unwilling obligation affected both his energy and his physical health. For the remaining year and a half of his life, he was a sad and tired man, dutifully performing his vast task, and straining his heart to a breaking point. In 1940 he was confined to bed with his first heart attack, but found it difficult to relax in his work.

<sup>(1)</sup> Bruce Hutchison: The Incredible Canadian, pp.250-1.