

and that we were in a peculiarly happy position of being able to interpret the views and opinions of other countries to one another. As he spoke, I thought of a remark a friend of mine recently made respecting Canada's position in that connection.

We are as intimately associated as possible with Great Britain; we are all part of the British Empire; we are all one in the political institutions we possess, and we are all one in our allegiance, our loyalty and our sovereignty. In regard to France we are in the exceptional position of being related by kinship, by past tradition, by sentiment and by language in large part. We have with France an association that no other country in the world begins to parallel. In regard to the United States we are so situated geographically that between us we occupy practically the whole of this continent. Our people are travelling back and forth across an invisible line and I imagine we in Canada understand the people of the United States better than they are understood by the people of any other country in the world. There again we are in a happy position with respect to our neighbour. Now it so happens that Japan is our nearest neighbour across the Pacific. Thus as a country we are situated, so to speak, in the centre of the four great powers that are instrumental in controlling world affairs as far as they relate to peace and war. In connection with the invitation that was issued by the United States in respect to the renunciation of war, that invitation was issued in the first instance to Great Britain, France and Japan as three of the great powers. We are in the happy position of having this close relationship and association with all of those great powers and one of the strongest arguments that could be urged for the opening of legations in those countries is that it will enable us as Canadians to gain the attention of those countries on matters that are of concern to our immediate neighbours, to gain a knowledge of the problems that are affecting them in relation to the problems that affect ourselves and that it will put us in a position to exercise, in a manner that will be helpful to all, that exceptional knowledge which we may come to possess in this way and the exceptional opportunity which is ours as well.

May I, just to hurry along, refer to the other points which my hon. friend has brought up? He said that the alternatives as to the future of Canada were alternatives of independence and continuance in the British

Empire. I hope my hon. friend in his remarks did not wish to infer—and I do not think he did—that in taking a step of this kind there was anything which savoured of a desire for independence on the part of this country.

Sir GEORGE PERLEY: I had no idea of suggesting that the right hon. gentleman had any desire for independence, but I did say that I thought this path he was taking, if followed through, would lead there.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: My hon. friend is straying up the wrong path when he speaks in that way. I submit that quite the contrary is the case. I submit that the action which the government is taking is along a line which is going to help to maintain our relationship within the British Empire, a line which might I think come to be directed in another way were we to pursue the avenue that my hon. friend has been advocating. That point I want to make perfectly clear in dealing with these questions of foreign relations and we might as well face the broad issue at once. We are as respects methods of representation face to face with the alternatives he has suggested. One is the old conception of a centralized single control, no matter by what other name you may describe it. The other is the method of a joint control. The centralized control conception had its day for some years in the advocacy of an imperial parliament by imperial federalists. Anyone who opposed the idea of an imperial parliament was described as a separatist or out for independence just because he could not approve a parliament highly centralized. To-day you will not find any advocates of imperial federation. Then the next attempt we had was to bring about an imperial council, to have some body sitting in London as a council which would be able to control the affairs of the empire. I doubt very much whether anyone to-day would advocate that method of centralized control. Now there is proposed another step in the same direction. My hon. friend would have us represented in different parts of the world by one of those centralized bodies who would act for the whole. The way to maintain the British Empire in its foreign relations is not by monopoly of control on the part of any one part of the empire, but by a joint control on the part of all.

Sir GEORGE PERLEY: I was advocating joint control.