

Mr. CHURCH: I should like to ask the hon. member a question: Why does he not urge that Canada get out of the empire altogether?

Mr. THORSON: I have just indicated definitely and clearly that I do not wish Canada to get out of the empire, and that this bill is not a declaration of independence.

Mr. CHURCH: I rise to a point of order.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Selkirk has exhausted his time to speak.

Mr. CHURCH: I call the attention of the chair to the fact that the hon. member has spoken for fifty minutes. You, Mr. Speaker, called me to order last night for speaking thirty-eight minutes.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order. The hon. member for Broadview should not say that. I have always given him the benefit of the doubt at all times.

Mr. T. L. CHURCH (Broadview): The hon. member has not unanimous consent to continue.

To-morrow morning Hitler will receive the news of this proceeding with great satisfaction, and the dictators will wonder where Canada stands and where Canada is drifting. Let me tell the hon. member for Selkirk (Mr. Thorson) that long before his people came to this country, it was settled by the British born; that this is a British country and under the British flag. He introduced this bill on February 3, eight weeks ago to-day. How does it come about that this particular bill is moved for second reading the day after the right hon. leader of the house made his statement in regard to foreign policy and the defence of this dominion? How does it come about that this separatist, isolationist bill is introduced in the House of Commons to-day? It is an insult to the British born of this country for the hon. member to make some of the statements he has made. I have read some of the hon. member's speeches about victims of British policy to the loyal people of Quebec, who have always been loyal to the British crown. Montcalm and Wolfe lie side by side, and the monument commemorating them bears tribute to the joint part they played for Canada. Last night I paid tribute to the great French nation for having with the assistance of Great Britain, saved civilization in the great war.

The hon. member calls his bill:

An act respecting the status of Canada in time of war.

And he goes on to say it is expedient that the status of Canada in time of war should

[Mr. Thorson.]

be made clear. But the mere fact that he says it is expedient does not make it expedient. The hon. member is evidently opposed to the former leader of the Liberal Party, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, who said that when Britain is at war, Canada is at war. Let me say to my hon. friend that Canada is not going to be talked out of the British empire. If Canada could have been talked out of the British empire, it would have been talked out long ago by some of those who came to Canada a few years ago and are enjoying all the privileges and rights and liberties of this country, but who refuse to pay tribute to the mother of nations who gave us these liberties and the freedom and civilization we all enjoy. Everything we enjoy in this dominion to-day we owe to the protection of the British flag and the United Kingdom. Let me say to the hon. member that there will be great rejoicing to-night on the part of Hitler and the other dictators when they read that Canada is divided in the way it is. In 1914 that is what Germany was depending upon, that the dominions would be divided among themselves. After the statements of the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) and the leader of the opposition (Mr. Manion) yesterday, he is now throwing cold water on the whole thing. What is becoming of Canada when we hear a debate along these lines? The hon. member says, "It is expedient." If there is one thing that it is not expedient to mention at this time, it is the subject matter of this particular bill. He says:

Whereas it is expedient that the status of Canada in time of war should be made clear and declared by the parliament of Canada: Therefore His Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate and House of Commons of Canada, enacts as follows:

1. Canada shall not assume the status of a belligerent.

Canada has nothing to be belligerent with. It has no army, no fleet, no air force; it is dependent, as it was in 1812, upon the mother country for all the privileges it enjoys. If Hitler sailed up the St. Lawrence with his modern war equipment, there would be very short shrift for the hon. gentleman who introduced this bill and for others of similar views, pacifists who were responsible for Munich and for the rise of the dictators to-day.

The mother country did not ask Canada to do what she did in the last war; Canada did it voluntarily and, I believe, would do the same to-day in similar circumstances, namely, go to Britain's aid in trouble. This bill provides that Canada shall not assume the status

of a belligerent. Canada is, by this bill, assuming the status of a country that is out of touch with British institutions. The explanatory note of the bill says:

As Canada is a sovereign nation in personal union with other nations under His Majesty—

Yes, indeed, Canada is a nation; but it is a nation which for all its civil and religious liberties and everything else depends upon the mother country. Yes, Canada is a nation all right, on the front pages of United States monthly journals, and at five o'clock teas and ten o'clock dinners at Washington, but Canada is a pauper in actual performance. Canada is sovereign in talk only; that is as far as our sovereignty goes. Canada may have equality of status, but it certainly has not equality of stature. This bill will lead more to disunion than to union. The other day one of the former French premiers said you never knew when Great Britain could speak, because she was bound by the dominions. If we are to take the word of the hon. gentleman to-day, the dominions are nothing but a drag on the mother country, and if his view is correct, the sooner Canada gets out of the British empire, the better it will be for all concerned. This former premier of France said it was impossible to make any treaty with Great Britain because she could not speak with one voice, and that is the sort of thing which has been fatal to our country; that is the result of separatism all along the line, so fatal in peace and disastrous in war. The hon. gentleman wants to go further and abolish appeals to the privy council, and that is just another step towards putting Canada entirely outside the empire. The bill says, "It is expedient." With the situation that exists in Europe to-day, is it expedient that we should sit here and throw to the four winds of heaven everything that was said yesterday and to-day in regard to helping the mother country in regard to foreign affairs in time of war? I say it is not.

Further, Mr. Speaker, I say this bill cannot be passed by parliament without the consent of the provinces. The four original provinces that originally entered confederation came in under a contract, and that contract cannot be changed by a separatist bill such as this without their consent. That was laid down in a text-book on the Statute of Westminster and Dominion Status by K. C. Wheare, Oxford Press, 1938, where at page 177 it is stated:

The fundamental fact in the case of the Dominion of Canada was that it was a federation.

At pages 183 and 184 it is stated that Mr. Ferguson, former premier of Ontario, presented a memorandum "that no restatement of the

procedure for amending the constitution of Canada can be accepted" without Ontario's consent. He objected to the Statute of Westminster and contended that legally there was no power to change the original contract in relation to the Statute of Westminster. Ontario is a British province, and the other day the legislature of Ontario spoke for the people of this province. I believe it spoke also for many of the people of Quebec. We are part and parcel of the British empire; the four provinces that came into confederation did so as partners of Great Britain, and that situation cannot be changed without the consent of the people of the four original provinces.

Then the bill goes on to say that the status of Canada in time of war should be made clear. Well, if war comes in this country we shall have nothing with which to defend ourselves. The hon. member for Rosetown-Biggan (Mr. Coldwell) addressed two or three meetings in Toronto during the past year. He is an isolationist also. If he had his way I believe we would be out of the British empire altogether, and if that is the policy of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation, the sooner it is known the better. No doubt this bill would please some of the glorious company of professors and some of the goodly fellowship of cabinet ministers, who have a different policy for each province; it may please some of the noble army of royal commissions and some of the favourites of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation among the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation party and other groups, who can speak over the radio along this line with no opposition at all. But let me say this parliament has no mandate from the people to pass a bill of this kind. I believe the people should vote on this measure, and the question is whether or not we are willing to trust the people and give them the right to decide this matter at a general election. The hon. gentleman who introduced this bill, and others who support this separatist policy, have been wrong before. They relied on the League of Nations, now in ruins. We were told that if we belonged to the league, because of the league we would see war no more. They were wrong then as they are now.

I want to thank you, Mr. Speaker, very much because I think you have always given both sides a fair show in regard to all these matters. You have had a very difficult and trying task in holding an even balance, but I think you have done your utmost to see that goodwill and fair play will prevail in these important discussions. Now, however,

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