

mained as set forth by the Prime Minister in the assembly in September, 1936. As has been indicated, no one in the recent discussion at Geneva ventured to hold that the sanctions articles were now in force. It would have taken considerable hardihood to make such a contention in view of the absolute refusal of league members, great and small, to invoke sanctions in the present conflict between Japan and China.

In fact, the present situation as to the interpretation of the sanctions articles was well summed up by the representative of Belgium in the committee of twenty-eight:

To-day is a grave conflict, the anxiety is to avoid procedures that might lead to the application of article 16, because account is taken of the obstacles that would be met with in its application.

At the same time, the possibility must be taken into account, that, in the phrase of another speaker, the article may be resurrected, or, as it has been put elsewhere, may be taken out of cold storage when it suits the interests of some of the members that now completely ignore its existence.

To avoid any possibility of ambiguity or misunderstanding, it is therefore desirable to repeat that the position indicated in the assembly of 1936 and in this house earlier in the same year remains the position of the Canadian government. We recognize the honesty and the idealism of those who call for a universal and automatic application of sanctions. We do not consider that it would make for honesty or decency or good will among nations to attempt an in and out interpretation of the covenant, based on the varying interests of some of the members of the league. So far as the Canadian government is concerned, the sanctions articles have ceased to have effect by general practice and consent, and cannot be revived by any state or group of states at will.

Now may I pass to the question of our relationship to the foreign policy of other members of the British commonwealth of nations, and particularly the United Kingdom. The task of the United Kingdom in the field of foreign affairs has been an extraordinarily difficult one of late years. Its own position has been modified by shifts in the balance of power throughout the world and the invention of weapons of war which have ended its own insularity, and introduced new factors into the Mediterranean area. As one of the great powers, it has had to consider not only its own protection, but the maintenance of peace throughout the world and particularly on the continent of Europe. There may be differences of opinion as to the wisdom of

some of the policies adopted to secure these ends in the twenty years since the war, but I think there can be little question of the unremitting care and anxiety which those responsible for the foreign policy of Britain have devoted to their task, or of their strong and determined effort to establish peace and maintain respect for solemn pledges and the principles of law.

No course of action adopted by the United Kingdom in foreign affairs can fail to have repercussions, great or small, upon Canada and the other members of the commonwealth of nations. The problem of adjustment this fact presents is one of the most difficult and complicated that faces Canada and other parts of the commonwealth as well. A number of courses have been urged or practised. It may be helpful to review these briefly. I believe that all of them have been mentioned in this house in the course of discussions on defence matters and other questions. They have been mentioned by one or another member who has been prepared to support the point of view he urged.

One attitude that has been proposed is to say that we will accept any policy adopted by the British government of the day, and give it our support, regardless of our own views and interests, and regardless of consequences.

It is only necessary to spell out the implications of this view to make it clear that even its exponents would hesitate to adopt it in all cases. The goal of United Kingdom policy may remain the same, but the paths by which that goal is sought vary widely. The view which I have mentioned would involve being prepared to follow every variation in the trend of British policy due to changing situations on the continent, changing party fortunes or changing ideas of national advantage. It would mean one year following a Conservative government, next year a Labour government; one year leaning toward collective security, next year perhaps toward isolation.

A second course would be to say that we will accept the policy of Great Britain whenever she acts through the league and in accordance with the covenant.

It was held in some quarters some years ago that the fact that all parts of the commonwealth were members of the league and that Great Britain would not go to war except under a league decision and in accordance with a covenant binding all parts equally and automatically, had conveniently and permanently solved the question of intra-commonwealth war relations. Experience has shown that no such automatic solution is