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gether. If he does, he has turned another political somersault, for, as late as November 2nd, 1939, not four months ago, he used these words:

"Considering everything, the course followed by the government in keeping full control of our war programme is probably the best for Canada as, under our parliamentary system, an alert and constructively critical Opposition is second only in importance to the government itself."

With Dr. Manion's view, as expressed at that time, I am in the most complete agreement. I have not changed my views. I can only assume that Dr. Manion has changed his views because he sees no possibility whatever of the election of a Conservative government.

Opposition an Essential Part of Parliamentary System.

Let it never be forgotten that the existence of an official Opposition gives our system of government two great advantages. Without an Opposition a much needed safeguard against hasty and ill-advised action on the part of the administration would be lacking. Even the best of governments will make mistakes. In time of war, avoidable mistakes may be much more costly than in time of peace. Responsible criticism helps to ensure good administration.

If there is no effective Opposition, the people are left without a known alternative to the administration, once a government loses the confidence of parliament or the country. This is the second advantage of an opposition properly performing its constitutional duty. Those who desire to defeat a government should know who its successors will be and what their policies are. In the fact that, under the British system of parliamentary government, there is a responsible

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opposition, ready to assume the burden of office whenever an existing administration loses the confidence of the country, lies the secret of the peaceful political evolution of the British Commonwealth. It is our strongest protection against violent and revolutionary change.

That is one of the reasons why Parliament itself by statute has made the Leader of the Opposition a salaried officer. His position in Parliament, in many respects, is second only to that of the Prime Minister. It is his duty to contribute to the collective thinking and to the parliamentary discussions which help to shape the policies on which government and laws are founded. A great modern writer has said: "It is not always realized how much of the essence of democracy is contained in the insistence on a tolerated and official opposition." Under this system even political opponents serve a common purpose. It is because your representatives pool their experience, air their differences, and even their discontents, that progress becomes possible. Any other system is a denial of democracy. It becomes either out and out autocracy, or dictatorship under some other disguise.

Liberals Will Constitute Opposition if Present Government Not Returned.

In order that there may be no misunderstanding about the position of the members of the present government, I should like to make that position very clearly known. In saying what I do, I speak with the authority and support of every member of the Cabinet. If, after an appeal has been made to the country on our war effort and our policies, we are not returned to power, those of us who are elected, together with our following, will not betray our parliamentary duty, but will constitute His Majesty's Loyal Opposition. I make that simple, straightforward statement, so that there

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