

nations have gone so far in their efforts to preserve peace that they have been the subject of strong and bitter criticism on the part of many people in their respective countries because of what was called, with derision, the "appeasement" policy. As regards Munich, I am not so sure that the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Woodsworth) did not last year blame the powers who were responsible for the peace at Munich. Last night he seemed to criticize the democratic powers for having allowed the dictators to invade and take possession of other countries. But surely if Canada, allied with Britain or France, had then gone to the rescue of these victims, and if my hon. friend entertained then the same principles and the same views that he expressed last night, he would have opposed the government of Canada for taking such a step.

Every speech that has been made has shown that this will be a gigantic conflict—the British empire, the dominions and France against Nazi Germany, and Bolshevik Russia, who looms up on the horizon. I will not repeat what the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Manion) and the other speakers have said regarding the character of the conflict and the principles and ideals which underlie it. I share largely the views and opinions of my friend the hon. member for Selkirk (Mr. Thorson). I know what a great friend of peace he is. Like him, I deeply regret being compelled to follow this course, but in my soul and conscience I cannot take any other.

Will you allow me, sir, to reply to a certain campaign which is being carried on in my own province by certain people? My arguments last session—and I am happy that the occasion was given to me before this conflict came to express my views on the matter—my arguments last session as to the insurmountable difficulties in the way of Canada being neutral from a real and practical point of view, and the almost insurmountable difficulties from a legal point of view, still stand. Nobody in my province—I call attention to that; newspapermen, members of parliament or others—has answered them, has tried to answer them. Even my good friend the hon. member for Beauharnois-Laprairie, who spoke to-day for neutrality, has never said a word to show that it was possible for Canada to be neutral.

A week or so ago I went to take part in the Canadian Bar Association convention in the city of Quebec. A committee of that association had the same day considered the proposed bill of the hon. member for St. Lawrence-St. George (Mr. Cahan) to do away with appeals to the privy council, and the decision was that they were opposed to doing away with such

appeals. In conversation with a leading member of the bar and of the association from the province of Quebec I was told by him that he might share my views and those of the hon. member for St. Lawrence-St. George, but that the lawyers of the province of Quebec were trusting more in the lords of the privy council for their judicial decisions than in the majority of the Supreme Court of Canada, coming from the other provinces. Well, if some of our leading men who entertain these views now are for the neutrality of Canada, they still desire that judicial decisions affecting Canada shall be given by the judges in England.

Under our constitution, even after the statute of Westminster—for it was left there because Canada wanted it to be left—we cannot amend the constitution of the Dominion of Canada in any way without applying to the parliament at Westminster. How then can anybody say that we have no interest, that there is no link there, when the powers of legislating which we have we derive from the parliament at Westminster? It is our own will—I am not saying mine, but the will of the majority—that it should be so, and it is still so. How can we say that we have no bond with the parliament which gives us our power to legislate as it exists to-day?

I gave last session, and I will not repeat them to-day, some of the reasons why it is impossible, practically, for Canada to be neutral in a big war in which England is engaged. We have a common national status; a British subject in Canada is a British subject in London or anywhere in the commonwealth, and a British subject in England is a British subject in Canada. We are using the diplomatic and consular functions of Great Britain throughout the world. Some of the most important sections of our criminal code are predicated on the absence of neutrality in the relations between Canada and Great Britain. The Foreign Enlistment Act, which we enacted only a year or so ago, indicates that Canada cannot be neutral, at least without repealing that legislation. I wish those who express great sentiments and views would answer me once on these matters; I should like it. Our shipping legislation is predicated on our alliance with Great Britain and our relations with her. If we had neutrality all Canadian ports would be closed to all armed vessels of Britain, and in time of war merchant ships have to arm themselves in order to travel over the ocean. As I said last year, the citizens of my city of Quebec would have to prevent the *Empress of Britain* from coming to Quebec harbour during a war, because she would have guns to protect her when travelling on the ocean. We would have to prevent enlistment

[Mr. E. Lapointe.]