

MARCH 26, 1928

D14232 1797

brought into this house a resolution to the effect that with respect to all treaties in the future, especially those that involved military or economic sanctions, no government of Canada should have the power to commit this country without first bringing the treaties to parliament and having them approved there. I say to my hon. friend that these larger policies are the all-important essential factors in seeking the promotion of peace and international good will.

Let me read the last paragraph of a resolution which I introduced into this house on June 21, 1926 and which was subsequently passed. It refers to a resolution of the imperial conference of 1923:

This house approves of the procedure proposed for the negotiation, signature and ratification of treaties and conventions, and considers further that before His Majesty's Canadian ministers advise ratification of a treaty or convention affecting Canada, or signify acceptance of any treaty, convention or agreement involving military or economic sanctions, the approval of the parliament of Canada should be secured.

In other words, our method of promoting peace and international understanding with respect to these very large affairs which come before the nation in its international dealings, is to lay down the doctrine that before this country shall be committed to obligations under a treaty involving military or economic sanctions, that treaty shall first of all be submitted to and approved by this parliament. These are policies that transcend the work of government departments; they reach down to the work of parliament itself.

I may say to my hon. friend that within the last few months the government was asked, with respect to a treaty that was being negotiated between Great Britain and Egypt, whether we would become a party to that treaty. The terms of that treaty are known, they have been published. They involved military sanctions, and they contemplated military alliances. What was the reply of the government to that question? It was that we did not believe that so far as Canada was concerned the parliament of Canada would approve such a course; that if Britain and Egypt could work out a treaty as between themselves along the lines proposed, well and good; but that so far as Canada was concerned, we did not feel that it was in the interests of the British Empire itself or in the interests of the larger peace which it was hoped the treaty would serve, that this country should be asked to become a party to it; and the British government immediately accepted our view in reference thereto.

I say to my hon. friend that questions of international relations have to be considered

more and more as they arise, and depend for their solution, whether from the point of view of peace or from the point of view of war, largely on the view of the administration in office.

May I say this as a last word to my hon. friend: it is because great policies of the kind can be worked out only by administrations that in matters of this nature, are strong enough to hold their own, that I appeal so strongly to her and to those about her to see the wisdom of and at all times realize the importance of men and women who feel and think alike on these great questions, economic questions and questions of peace and war, so uniting their forces that in matters of this kind they may find themselves in the position where they will have the final word.

W. L. Mackenzie King Papers

Speeches-1922 - 1932

**PUBLIC ARCHIVES**  
**ARCHIVES PUBLIQUES**  
**CANADA**