

Canada, whether it approves or not, will have to say yes? Does he say that when the policy is shortly afterwards reversed by the people of Great Britain at the polls we are to be obliged to say "Amen," and that when there is a shift to the original position we are to submit to whatever may be the result of this changeable and uncertain policy?

Within a period of five years I witnessed the double somersault of three British governments. In 1924 the Government of Ramsay MacDonald agreed to sign at Geneva the optional clause with respect to compulsory arbitration of matters of a legal or justiciable nature before the International Tribunal at The Hague. Canada was favourable to that policy, and said so. Two months later the people rejected the MacDonald Government at the polls, and the Baldwin-Chamberlain Government discarded that optional clause respecting compulsory arbitration. Canada had to mark time, but became impatient of delay, and our Prime Minister declared at the session of 1929 that we would proceed to adhere to that optional clause after notifying the members of the Commonwealth. In June of that year the Baldwin Government was defeated, mainly, as I was told, on its international policy at Geneva, and the Ramsay MacDonald Government, which was again returned, signed the optional clause. Now, I ask the right honourable gentleman, would his plan of co-operation force Canada to be at the beck and call of every wabbling British government? Are we reverting to the status of a Crown colony?

I have heard many statements from men of note indicating that history will be severe on the uncertainty of the policy of Great Britain since 1920. Some three or four years ago a brilliant British journalist said to a Frenchman who was confessing that France had very unstable governments: "That is so, but you have a stable policy. We have a stable government, but no stable policy."

At times my right honourable friend has allowed his imperialism to carry him to extremes. In his famous Toronto speech in 1922 he was even ready to follow that unreliable Welshman, Mr. Lloyd George, who wanted Canada to send troops to Chanak to defend the Dardanelles against the Turks. If my right honourable friend had been at the helm would he have said "Ready, aye ready" without consulting Parliament? At times he recognizes the supremacy of Parliament and is even ready to consult the people as to the extent of our contributions to Great Britain's wars. The right honourable gentleman went from Toronto to Hamilton.

I may say that on this question the Liberal policy has not varied from the time of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's pronouncement in 1910, which affirms the authority of the Canadian Parliament in the matter of our co-operation in a conflict which does not affect Canada directly, and to-day the Prime Minister, Mr. King, reaffirms the sole authority of the Canadian Parliament with regard to our participation in any such conflict.

The Speech from the Throne declares that it is the duty of Canada to strengthen her defence. She must do so in order to face two possible contingencies: first, to defend our neutrality, if the United States be involved; second, to resist attack resulting from an embargo which Canada may decree with respect to a state which is an aggressor against the Commonwealth. President Roosevelt has said as much for the United States. That country and Canada, with or without their signatures to the Briand-Kellogg pact, could not do otherwise, nor less. They could not submit to becoming accomplices of an aggressor.

Canada's expenditure is exclusively for defence. It involves or implies no question of military expeditions abroad. The present Prime Minister has repeated that statement more than once on the floor of the House of Commons; and lately the preceding Prime Minister, Mr. Bennett, expressed the same view at, I think, Calgary, if not at Edmonton or Vancouver. Of course, Parliament remains supreme, and it may decide otherwise. My right honourable friend (Right Hon. Mr. Meighen) has suggested a most important safeguard, for fear that Parliament may not represent public opinion. His suggestion is that an appeal be made to the people. Here are excerpts from his Hamilton speech of November 17, 1925. I take these from the Montreal Gazette, and if he desires that his full statement be quoted I will put it on Hansard. He said:

I do not anticipate that we of this generation will ever be called upon to take part in war again, and I earnestly hope that our children and our children's children may be free from the curse of war, but if ever the time should come when the spectre of 1914 should again appear I believe it would be best, not only that Parliament should be called, but the decision of the Government, which, of course, would have to be given promptly, should be submitted to the judgment of the people at a general election before troops should leave our shores. This would contribute to the unity of our country in the months to come and would enable us best to do our duty.