

I come now to the question of sovereignty. Of course, this is a matter which must be treated with the deepest respect, but, whether one is discussing national sovereignty or parliamentary sovereignty, what matters is the purpose of sovereignty. To me, sovereignty is not something to be hoarded, sterile and barren, carefully protected by the right hon. Member for Down, South (Mr. Powell) in a greatcoat with its collar turned up. Nor is sovereignty something which has to be kept in the crypt to be inspected by my hon. Friend the Member for Banbury on the eve of the opening of Parliament.

Sovereignty is something for us as custodians to use in the interests of our own country. The question we have to decide, therefore, in carrying through this great political purpose, as I believe it to be, for the peace and freedom of Europe and of our own country, is how we are entitled to use that measure of sovereignty which is required. That, I believe, puts it perfectly fairly. It is a judgment which we have to make, and I answer without hesitation that the sacrifice of sovereignty, if it be put in that extreme form, or the sharing of sovereignty, the transfer of sovereignty or the offering of sovereignty is fully justified. Indeed were we not to do so in the modern world, I believe that as a Parliament, as a party and as a Government we should be culpable in the eyes of history. I believe, therefore, that sovereignty is for this House to use in the way it thinks best.

[Edward Heath, 9<sup>th</sup> April 1975]

Note: The Member for Banbury was Neil Marten, who was running the "No" campaign during the 1975 referendum.