

listen to the voice of that other great apostle of peace, Benedict XV, who then reigned in Rome. Hence our situation to-day.

For years certain countries in Europe have done all in their power to destroy religion, and we see the results to-day. Precepts of hatred have replaced those precepts of love which were brought to this earth twenty centuries ago by the Divine One who said: "Love ye one another." That is why the progress of science, instead of serving to relieve suffering humanity, prepares rather for its destruction. Yet do we not thirst for peace? The modest artisan, the business man, the ordinary citizen, whatever may be his station in life—all of us want only to pursue the peaceful tenor of our ways. To-day the world is in such a state that a few tyrants, whose people have provided them with infinite power, have succeeded in making the whole universe stand in fear, notwithstanding the general desire for peace.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what will be Canada's attitude in the nearing conflict if Great Britain is drawn in? I say that our strict duty is to remain out of it unless Canada is attacked or directly menaced. We have no right to repeat the sad experiment of 1914. We have no right to sacrifice our young people and lead our country to the brink of ruin in order to defend the cause of certain European countries. We must think of Canada first, as the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) said yesterday and the Minister of Justice (Mr. Lapointe) said to-day. If in the past Canada contracted any debts toward certain European countries, we have repaid them largely. If we are asked to show receipts we can point to the 60,000 Canadian soldiers who are sleeping their last sleep overseas. Our own difficulties are quite sufficiently hard to solve. The inheritance of taxation which we have because of our participation in the last conflict is already too great a burden on the shoulders of our Canadian people. After twenty years we have not yet even succeeded in discharging the undertakings of the then leader of the government on behalf of our returned soldiers. Yet I know we still have in this country a certain number of imperialistic extremists who would stop at nothing to launch Canada into the same sort of tragic adventure of which we all have such sad recollections.

May I be permitted to quote the words of Sir Robert Borden, former Prime Minister of Canada, spoken to the members of the Canadian expeditionary forces in 1917, and to be found in the February, 1939, *Trafalgar* [Mr. Lapointe (Matapédia-Matane).]

House News, the official organ of the Ottawa branch, British empire service league. He said:

You are men actually facing the enemy day and night. You are suffering greatly from fatigue, overstrain and lack of rest. The marvel of it is that men could undergo such a strain without breaking; but you have never yet broken, and history will appreciate that in days to come.

You men are about to enter one of the most serious engagements that ever faced the Canadian corps. I cannot, at this moment, give any information as to where this attack will be staged; whether it be successful or not, it is to be borne in mind that it will not be an easy success. . . . We feel confident that you will succeed where others failed for you have never yet failed in anything you have set your hand to, as a Canadian corps.

You can go into this action feeling assured of this, and as the head of the government, I give you this assurance, that you need have no fear that the government and the country will fail to show just appreciation of your service to the country and empire in what you are about to do, and what you have already done.

The government and the country will consider it their first duty to see that a proper appreciation of your effort and of your courage is brought to the notice of the people at home, and it will always be our endeavour to so guide the attitude of public opinion that the country will support the government to prove to the returned man its just and due appreciation of the inestimable value of the services rendered to the country and empire; and that no man, whether he goes back or whether he remains in Flanders, will have just cause to reproach the government for having broken with the men who won and the men who died.

Notwithstanding this solemn engagement, a great many veterans, affected by their war service but unable to establish claims to pension or compensation, wander to-day through the streets of our cities and towns, dragging out their broken, handicapped lives, and the government can find no way of helping them.

I have often been shocked at hearing most unpleasant remarks made about these men, that they are lazy, heartless, that they do not want to earn their own living. No doubt, Mr. Speaker, some of them are less worthy of sympathy than others, but I know that for many of them war broke the mainspring of their will power. They saw their courage and the last ounce of their energy gone under nights of terrifying bombardments, and I pity such men with all my heart because I understand.

Like many of my hon. colleagues in this house, I, too, saw war service, not as a general, not as an officer, but as a full private. So I think I know something of what war is. I know the meaning of that tragic word.

I hold in my hand the shoulder-strap of a captured German soldier. This bit of cloth,

which once belonged to a soldier of the 4th Bavarian regiment—his division I forget—brings back to me tragic recollections which will never be effaced from my memory. It reminds me of the hardships I endured, of all the horrors of war. It reminds me of my poor comrades-in-arms dying in the mud after most horrible agony. It reminds me also of the day when for the first time I aimed my rifle at the enemy.

It was at the battle of Hill 70, on August 15, 1917, and I was in the first assaulting wave. At a certain moment I had a man's life at my mercy at the end of my rifle. I took aim, but did not fire immediately. At the risk of having some of my colleagues consider me lacking in courage, I confess that, before firing, I let such thoughts as these run through my mind: This man has probably not wanted war but has been drawn into it by the force of events. Like me surely he wants to live. He also has dear ones at home awaiting his return, and here am I going to make orphans of them.

I remember, Mr. Speaker, that when I enlisted as a volunteer, Canada was calling on her sons to go to the defence of civilization and fight for the survival of democracy in a war to end war and bring everlasting peace to the world. That was less than a quarter of a century ago, and to-day the world is faced with a state of affairs the like of which we have never before seen. The world has gone mad, blinded by hatred, and is rushing to destruction. Is it possible that all the sufferings we endured and all the millions of lives that were sacrificed during the last conflict were in vain? It seems impossible to believe. Others may have forgotten, but I have not. That is why, even at the risk of causing scandal among some people who may be more attached to the empire than to Canada, I must state that I shall use my last ounce of strength and energy left me by war to fight against conscription in this country for outside wars. I am ready to-day to make every possible effort to prevent the participation of Canada in any outside war unless the future of our dominion is at stake. My reason for so doing is that I wish to save my compatriots, be they of French, English, or other descent, from the sad experience I myself underwent. But I must add that, if Canada were attacked, I should want to be the first to answer the clarion call and shed the last drop of blood for my country.

I should like to recall the speech made by Archdeacon A. P. Gower Rees, general chaplain assistant of the British forces during the

great war. At a banquet of the "6087 overseas association," given at the Windsor Hotel, Montreal, on November 11, 1938, to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the signing of the armistice, the archdeacon declared:

Anyone who states seriously that he would cheerfully go back to war deserves no better than a strait-jacket.

He added that he did not wish to see our young men die just when they were beginning to understand life.

The government is asking us this year to vote larger sums for national defence. But with the rapid and constant improvements that are being made in armaments throughout the world, we do not know what to-morrow will bring. I recognize the necessity for adequate protection of the life and property of our Canadian citizens.

I should like to recall the statement made by Major General Frank M. Andrews, chief of staff of military aviation in the United States, in St. Louis, Missouri, on January 17 last. He said:

In case of attack the main industrial centres and their civilian population could not be protected.

Major General Andrews made that statement before the annual conference of the national air association. He added:

The large American cities would present an easy mark for enemy airplanes from abroad if the government did not increase its national defence.

I have confidence in the Prime Minister and in all the members of his government. I am sure that if a crisis ever comes, they will not let themselves be guided by any imperialistic propaganda, but they will act first and above all in the best interests of Canada.

M. MAURICE LALONDE (Labelle):
Monsieur l'Orateur, le 11 novembre 1918, dans un wagon-salon en gare de Rethondes, se signait l'armistice qui mettait fin aux horribles tueries de la Grande Guerre. Le rêve de Guillaume II—qui peut se définir un germanisme délirant de mégalomanie, qui prétend imposer au monde, lequel voulait être libre, l'hégémonie du fer et de la force—s'écroulait dans un abîme d'humiliation. L'Allemagne se soumettait aux volontés des vainqueurs.

Cinq traités furent signés, qui devaient apporter à l'univers la paix promise aux hommes de bonne volonté. Versailles, Saint-Germain, Trianon, Neuilly et Lausanne. Ils