

this house. I can see the hon. member for Vancouver North when a returned man comes up to him, shabbily dressed, with no soles to his shoes, having to keep his coat collar up because he has no shirt on, and I can see the pained expression on the face of the hon. member—I have watched him—and he says, "Well my friend, I am sorry, but we are going to have 102 aeroplanes, just think of that. Your shoes may be bad, but look, we are going to have 102 aeroplanes to protect you." Protect him from what? They cannot protect him from poverty and misery, and if they cannot protect him from that they cannot protect him from anything. This returned man says to the hon. member, "Do you know where I can get a pair of cast-off shoes?" He replies, "Well, your shoes may be poor, but we are going to have mine sweepers in Vancouver harbour; just think of that! Never mind your shoes, just think of the mine sweepers." Should he not, and should we not bring those conditions to the attention of this house?

The Minister of National Defence, made reference to the resolution passed at the annual conference of the Labour party of Great Britain at Edinburgh this year. He gathered from that resolution that the Labour party in Great Britain was favouring the military program of the British government. But such is not the case. On page 906 of Hansard he quoted the resolution.

That in view of the threatening attitude of dictatorships which are increasing their armaments at an unprecedented rate, flouting international law, and refusing to cooperate in the work of organizing peace, this conference declares that the armed strength of the countries loyal to the League of Nations must be conditioned by the armed strength of the potential aggressors.

The conference therefore reaffirms the policy of the labour party,—

Notice this:

—to maintain such defence forces as are consistent with our country's responsibility as a member of the League of Nations.

Note: "As a member of the League of Nations."

I was present at that conference, and the statement was made quite definitely that that amendment did not obligate the parliamentary Labour party to vote for increased armaments in the House of Commons. They were free to oppose them if they saw fit, and we see by to-day's Montreal Gazette that they have done that. In a report of the discussion that took place on the armaments increase in the British House of Commons yesterday, I find this:

Frederick Pethick-Lawrence, a former financial secretary of the treasury, led for labour. He announced labour would vote against the resolution, due to two main reasons.

[Mr. MacInnis.]

It is not necessary for me to state those reasons, but the fact is that labour is opposing the rearmament program of the British government, but would support a rearmament program if the British government would give wholehearted allegiance to the League of Nations. And not only is the Labour party opposing the British government in their rearmament program, but the Liberal party is opposing it.

Sir Archibald Sinclair for the opposition Liberals pressed the point of foreign policy. He charged the country now was paying the price for the government's "feebleness and vacillation" in the Ethiopian dispute.

So there is no point in saying that the British Labour party is at present in favour of the government's rearmament program.

Mr. MARTIN: Will the hon. member permit a question? I was present at Edinburgh at the conference to which he refers. Is it not true that at that conference it was resolved by the Labour party to support the then rearmament program of His Majesty's government of the United Kingdom as distinguished from the decisions of the past week?

Mr. MacINNIS: No; it is not true.

Mr. MARTIN: I say it is true.

Mr. MacINNIS: Well, we must differ on that point. The leader of the opposition, Major Attlee, made the statement quite clearly that the resolution then passed at the conference put the Labour party under no obligation to support the armament program of the British government.

Then the Minister of National Defence referred to Sweden. There is no comparison in this matter between Sweden and Canada. Sweden is an old nation which is very close to the centre of trouble in Europe. In Sweden most of their present armaments are of long standing. When the question of increase in military expenditures for the defence of Sweden came up in the Rigsdag last spring this is the position the social democratic party took. They said they would not consider external defence separate from internal defence; in other words they would not consider external defence separate from social security within. They had proposed a measure to increase old age pensions, and because they would not accept the rearmament program suggested by the opposition they were defeated. They went to the country and were returned, as was certain would be the case, with an increased majority. There is no comparison here to be made between Sweden and Canada.