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The United States has lost a number of its strategic island possessions. The British Empire has been in part dismembered; and in both the Pacific and the Indian oceans its very existence is threatened as never before. The Dutch Empire in the Far East has been destroyed.

In the Orient, as in Europe, what the free nations have lost in territory, in vital war supplies, in military and naval bases and strategic strongholds, the enemy has gained. The rubber, the tin, the oil which were formerly at the disposal of the free nations now go to strengthen the war effort of Japan. The security afforded until recently to the British, the Americans, the Dutch and the other democratic nations by the possession of Hong Kong, Singapore, the Philippines and Java, these bases now afford to the Japanese. They serve also as Japanese outposts for further aggression and conquest.

The full significance of these facts, I am convinced, has never been appreciated.

*The Factors that Count in War*

There has been far too great a tendency to measure the strength of the United Nations, not in terms of what it actually is, but in terms of what it is hoped it will become. There has been too great a disposition to speak of that strength, in terms of the relative sizes of populations, and extent of resources. We should think and speak only in terms of effective fighting forces and ships, tanks, planes, guns, and other equipment and munitions of war, actually available. The whole course of the war has shown that all else may prove to be a delusion and a snare.

We must also guard against another delusion, perhaps the most fatal of all forms of deception in war-time. I refer to the comfortable doctrine that time is on our side. Time will prove to be on our side only if the enemy can be held at bay and prevented from acquiring new sources of strength.

It is now altogether certain that Germany and Japan plan to unite their land forces in the course of this present year. They plan also by gaining supremacy at sea to isolate this hemisphere. Once isolated, North and South America would sooner or later be attacked both from the East and from the West. The first of these attacks might well be directed against our own country. Surely the Axis pattern of world conquest is now wholly clear. We must never forget that its aim is ultimate mastery of the entire world.

*The Sweep of Aggression Continues*

Even in the two and a half weeks since I last spoke to you, there have been still graver threats to the security of the nations with whose efforts our own are united. The sweep of aggression has been

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carried still further in the Pacific. British naval losses in the Indian ocean have been severe. In Burma, despite the determined efforts of British and Chinese troops, the Japanese continue to advance. The Japanese threat to India has become daily more serious. After resistance that was heroically prolonged, the gallant defenders of Bataan in the Philippines have had to retire. Signs are not lacking of the growing domination of the whole of France by Nazi Germany. In Europe and in the Middle East, the great lines of battle are definitely emerging. These ominous signs all emphasize the growing danger.

When we stop to consider the extent to which the Axis' plan of world conquest has already been achieved, it becomes perfectly clear that we cannot wait for time to win the victory for us. Unless every possible means is taken to hold the enemy while the free countries gather their strength, time will be on his side, not on ours. The fact that other nations have been struck, and Canada has so far been spared, should blind no one to the danger to our national existence. Too many nations that believed themselves safe, are to-day enslaved.

*Regard for all Aspects and Dangers*

You are being told that if the danger is as great as it is said to be our men should be kept at home; that if you vote YES they will all be sent overseas to fight for some other country, and that Canada's own coasts will be left unprotected. This is the argument being used by those who tell you that Canada is not fighting for its own interests, but to protect the imperial interests of Britain, or the interests of Communist Russia, or the interests of the United States, or the interests of some other country than our own.

The Canadian army is in Britain for exactly the same reason as the troops of the United States are now also in the British Isles, and for exactly the same reason as the troops of the United States are in Australia. They are there to help preserve freedom in this world, to keep the enemy away from this continent, and to help defeat the enemy before he becomes strong enough to defeat us. These matters, however, have nothing to do with the question at issue in the plebiscite. The government itself is well aware of the need of increased home defences. In fact, additional provision to this end has already been made. This, like all other questions of defence, will be fully weighed by the government in the light of all existing conditions and available knowledge. They are proper subjects of debate in parliament. They will not be decided by the plebiscite.