

parliamentary government is at an end. I sympathize with those who are conducting newspapers in this country to-day. They are under a terrific cost. I want to pay a tribute to what the press has done in this war. We had a newspaper bill up in the house some years ago, and on that occasion I paid a tribute to the press.

In my humble opinion the government of the day made a grave mistake when it changed the old system. We have a press bureau and an information bureau. I have received a huge pile of literature, but I have found that there is a most useful piece of furniture in my office called a waste-paper basket and that is where I consign a whole lot of it. The government has appointed this publicity board, and its officers and other liaison officers are running all over the country. Some of them are in Hollywood, and they are spending money like water flying by air to California, and all over the world. They have been over to the old country and to many other places. It is hard to know, except for our newspapers, what is going on in this country, and the newspapers supply the information at their own cost, without government aid.

The government should put back this function where it belongs with the press of the country. It is a reflection on the press to appoint such a board. The newspapers are quite capable of handling this work. They were doing it at a great cost to themselves. There has been parliamentary criticism since the days of the Stuart kings. Criticism is a tonic; it spurs the government into action. We had an example of this in connection with the bonus to the soldiers. Public opinion in Canada was aroused, and the government of the day were compelled to change their views and grant this bonus, after the municipalities from coast to coast forced it. The money spent by this information bureau will run into a fabulous sum before the war is over, and this money is being taken from the hard-earned wages of the people of Canada. If this money had been given to the press of the country, to the dailies and the weeklies, the work would have been handled much better, and economies effected.

I have been dissatisfied with the conduct of the war during the past two years. I do not apologize, nor do I offer any excuses for the constructive criticism which I have offered on many occasions. From time to time I protested against what I honestly thought were mistakes that were being made and that could have been avoided. I mention some of them to-day. Using the words of Abraham Lincoln, "I have done and said what appeared to me to be proper to do and say on these occasions."

A great deal has been said about the British empire, in which I believe overwhelmingly. It was said here by my former leader, Viscount Bennett, that on empire matters I represent a large body of public opinion in this country. I agree with a very important statement made by the Prime Minister of Great Britain last November when speaking at the Mansion House or Guildhall. He did not use any high sounding phrase like the British commonwealth of nations, first heard of when Lord Rosebery discovered it in 1900. I think the vast majority of the people of Canada will agree with what the Prime Minister of Great Britain then said. It was as follows:

Let me therefore make this clear in case there should be any mistake about it in any quarter. We mean to hold our own. I have not become the king's first minister in order to preside over the liquidation of the British empire.

I quite agree with those sentiments. I think Great Britain will be known in history as the good samaritan of the nations. Russia came into this world war because she was attacked by Germany. The United States came in after the attack on Pearl Harbour by Japan. The President of our great ally said that he reaffirmed the policy of George Washington and Andrew Jackson, those great presidents who said that, unless attacked, the United States should have nothing to do with world affairs and were isolationists. Britain was not attacked; she came into the war voluntarily because she had given a pledge to Poland. Others had given pledges, but they ran away from them. Great Britain, assisted by the dominions, bore the whole brunt of the war for over two years alone. If it had not been for Dunkirk and the hand of providence, long ago the United States and Canada would have had to make peace with the axis powers. That would have been the end of civilization. As I say, Britain will be known as the samaritan. She did not pass by on the other side like the lawyer, priest and the levite; she came immediately to the help of Poland with her whole strength and organization.

We talk about the League of Nations, but let me say what I have said before, the only League of Nations in the history of humanity that has been a success is the British empire. Long may it continue. Referring to this after the seven years' war, Burke said:

We ought to elevate our minds to the greatness of that trust to which the order of providence has called us. By adverting to the dignity of that high calling our ancestors have turned a savage wilderness into a glorious empire and have made the most extensive and the only honourable conquests, not by destroying but by promoting the wealth, number and happiness of the human race.