

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: The whole question discussed by my right honourable friend was put before the people of Canada in one or two broadcasts by the Prime Minister, and the people stood by the decision of the Government not to allow even the British Government to take possession of forty or fifty aerodromes for the purpose of establishing a system under its own laws while we had our own men, our own administration and our own system which could give it what it wanted. The Prime Minister, in the conversation he had with the High Commissioner, said it was preposterous that there should be two powers in Canada deciding on matters of importance such as that. He said what the people of Canada believe. I know that Imperialists like my right honourable friend—and Imperialist he is to the core—do not accept the idea that we should say this is an autonomous Canada with her own laws, and she is mistress in her own household. I know my right honourable friend's sentiment, but I tell him it is shared by but few. The people at large supported the Government, which said that Canada would furnish all the facilities required, but would furnish them under its own laws; that there could not be two Governments in this country at the same time. This was submitted to the people of Canada on the 26th of March last, and we know the result. I will refer to it again in a moment.

It would seem that my right honourable friend had fallen from Mars, and had come to this Chamber without any past, without any record, to tell us what should be done in this country. But he was in power from 1930 to 1935, and I would ask how the Federal Government—the Bennett-Meighen Government—administered the affairs of the country and provided for the defence of Canada and the British Empire. The answer is very simple. Nothing was done except to starve all the services and reduce our air force almost to the vanishing point.

When we came into power in October, 1935, what did we do? We hastened to attend to Canadian matters. Within three weeks the Prime Minister had obtained reciprocity with the United States, and a treaty was signed on the 11th of November, 1935. We then proceeded to prepare for the session of 1936; and in 1937, after looking around at the situation and making a survey of our various departments and finding that for five years our army, our militia, our air force and our navy had been practically starved by my right honourable friend's Government, we decided that something should be done. Throughout 1937, 1938 and 1939 the present Government felt the necessity of preparing, first, for the defence of Canada,

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and it appealed to Parliament to vote money for that purpose. That was a sentiment to bring together all Canadians. As my right honourable friend knows, there is such a thing as preparing public opinion, and matters like the equipping and outfitting of soldiers attract the masses only when they see men marching in the streets with bands in the lead.

There was such a thing as preparing the country for the defence of Canada and inducing the people to think nationally. All the provinces did not feel alike on this matter, but the Government succeeded in securing increasingly large votes of money from year to year for the defence of Canada.

This showed courage. I am not sure that in this respect my right honourable friend (Right Hon. Mr. Meighen), who has crossed swords with the Prime Minister both in the Commons and before the people, would not think that at times he was weak and indecisive. Yet it required courage to vote millions for the defence of Canada. We had to educate the people to the needs of the day, so that public opinion would support the action of the Government. This is what has been done and is being done in every other country. We may ask why President Roosevelt, strong as he is, does not do certain things. The answer is that public opinion must be formed; the people must be educated. In order to get the people of Canada to work together in unity, the Government had to bring them to a realization of the necessity of doing something for this country first. But my right honourable friend says, "No, the Empire is first."

Well, the war came and we had to prepare the defence of our coasts. We spent large sums of money in trying to revivify our militia and our air force, and to enlarge our navy, to enable us to take our position by the side of Great Britain. Of course it is easy for critics—I am not speaking of honourable members of this Chamber—to say we should have done more, and that in 1938 we should have foreseen the threat to Great Britain and to France and what was coming in Europe. My answer to that is that Canada was not at the controls. London had its diplomatic service, which was covering the whole of Europe, and yet the day after Munich it was admitted that Great Britain was unprepared.

I will cite the speech delivered by the Right Hon. Winston Churchill, present Prime Minister of England, on the 8th of May. He said:

In this war we are frequently asked why we do not take the initiative. The reason for this serious disadvantage of our not having the initiative is one which cannot be speedily