

*The Address—Mr. Hanson (York-Sunbury)*

overwhelming confidence of the House of Commons in Great Britain which he thought he ought to have.

Between 1937 and 1939 I submit that this government had ample warning of what was taking place in Europe. I am told—I cannot vouch for the truth of this because I have not access to the proof—that everything that was done by the government was done with absolutely no reference to what might take place in Europe, that the question of overseas operations was taboo.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I do not wish to interrupt my hon. friend, but I think I should take issue with him immediately on any statement that—

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): The right hon. gentleman will have plenty of time to reply.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: But when my friend makes a statement, and says he has no authority for the statement he makes, it is part of my duty to see that a statement which is incorrect is immediately denied; I say the statement just made is wholly incorrect.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Of course I know that the right hon. gentleman will take the opportunity to deny it, but I state that it is my information; and more than that, as proof of the truth of the position which I am trying to formulate, my understanding of the debates of this parliament is that on every vote for national defence that was passed from 1935 to 1939 it was emphasized that the money was for the defence of Canada and the defence of Canada only. That, I submit, is some proof of the truth of the position I am trying to define to-day.

Now may I ask where was Canada's first line of defence during all the trying period before September, 1939? Was it in Canada or was it over there where to-day they are striving with the beasts of Ephesus to preserve our liberty? We have never had more than one line of defence; our first and only line has been the British navy, and we ought to thank God reverently that we have such a defence—to which, however, we do not contribute a single dollar or a single man. It is only in times of stress such as we are going through now that we recognize the truth of these matters. As was stated on Friday last by the hon. member for Vancouver North (Mr. Sinclair), in normal times we take for granted the privileges of a British subject, and it is only in a period of trial and stress such as that in which we are now living that we realize what are the privileges

[Mr. R. B. Hanson.]

of a British subject and comprehend that during all these years the British government has been providing our first line of defence. Why, Canada could not defend herself against Siam! Make no mistake about that. Why all this talk about the defence of Canada? Why should we not be honest with ourselves and with the people of this country and say that our defence is the common defence of the British empire and our gallant allies? That is the only defence worth anything at this time, when our liberties and our very civilization are at stake, but we have done nothing to assist.

Where was the security of Canada ever menaced? Was it to the south? Well, for more than a hundred years, ever since the Rush-Bagot treaty, there has not been a single fort, a single gun or a single ship along the whole international boundary. That is a matter of mutual congratulation to the people of this dominion and the people of the republic to our south. We are not and never have been menaced by those friendly neighbours. On the contrary in the city of Kingston, on July 1, 1938, in the presence of the Prime Minister of this country, the president of the great republic to the south offered to take us under that country's wing and to defend us if we were ever attacked by an enemy from without. This afternoon I have no intention of saying one word repelling the goodwill of the president of the United States; it would be not only inappropriate but wholly inexpedient that I or anyone else should do so at this time, because I greatly appreciate the friendliness and goodwill of that country not only towards us but towards our mother country and our allies, and I am hopeful that it may become more than goodwill. But what they may do over there in that connection is their own business, and theirs alone. I wonder, however, if any self-respecting Canadian within the sound of my voice or anywhere in this country wants to see Canada dependent at any time for her national safety upon the government of the United States. Surely if we are a nation our self-respect will demand something more of ourselves than that. I am neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet, but if the day ever comes when we have to shelter ourselves behind the armed forces of the Stars and Stripes, that day we will haul down the Union Jack in Canada and it will never go up again.

No, I do not think we have any enemy to our south. Then what enemy have we to the west? Well, perhaps we have a potential enemy there. I do not want to say very much about that, but I believe that potential enemy is so busily engaged in digesting its gains in