

thereby neglecting, as they seemed to feel, some of our own more immediate domestic problems. If I have given to developments abroad a degree of attention greater than some may have felt should be given, it has not been owing to any neglect of a more immediate situation at home but rather because I believed that the problems which were becoming increasingly baffling in this as well as in other countries were not due to causes originating in our own land, but were the direct result of the international situation as it was disclosing itself in Europe and Asia.

I have never doubted that when the fatal moment came, the free spirit of the Canadian people would assert itself in the preservation and defence of freedom, as it did a quarter of a century ago. I have, however, been anxious that when the inevitable hour came, our people should be as one from coast to coast in recognizing the magnitude of the issue which was presenting itself, and as one in their determination to meet it with all the strength and power at their command. I have made it, therefore, the supreme endeavour of my leadership of my party, and my leadership of the government of this country, to let no hasty or premature threat or pronouncement create mistrust and divisions between the different elements that compose the population of our vast dominion, so that when the moment of decision came all should so see the issue itself that our national effort might be marked by unity of purpose, of heart and of endeavour.

At six o'clock the house took recess.

After Recess

The house resumed at eight o'clock.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: When the house rose at six o'clock, I had been speaking of the conditions which this government faced when it came into office, and has been facing ever since, in reference to the European situation.

As hon. members will recall, when this parliament first assembled it was faced with a critical situation in Abyssinia. Ethiopia had been invaded; and the first question which confronted the present government was that of the sanctions to be imposed against Italy because of an act of aggression on her part at that time. That was 1935. In 1936, in the spring of the year, the world was confronted with the sudden remilitarization of the Rhineland by Hitler; before we had reached the

middle of that year there was an outbreak of war in Spain, a civil war which came ominously soon after the invasion of Ethiopia, and, I think equally ominously, at a time which coincided with sudden developments in the way of aggression elsewhere on Germany's part. In 1937 the world witnessed the revival of the Japanese intervention in China. At that time the Spanish war threatened to embroil all Europe. With that condition on two continents, the world was faced in 1938 with the seizure of Austria by Hitler. Then came the Sudeten crisis and the campaign for the annexation of the Sudetenland, which was followed by the Munich pact in September, 1938.

It must be apparent to everyone now that, if Mr. Chamberlain had not gone to Munich when he did, on each of the three occasions that he sought to preserve the peace, war would have broken out at that time at the instance of Hitler and his regime. What position the world would be in to-day, with the lack of preparation in different parts of Europe and elsewhere on the part of the peaceful nations, none of us I should think would care to contemplate.

That was in 1938. In 1939, which is the present year, there came in March the seizure of Bohemia and Moravia by Germany; a little later in the same month, the seizure of Memel also by Germany; then the next month, in April, the seizure of Albania by Italy; and on September 1, the invasion of Poland by Hitler and his forces.

In other words, there has been a steady progression of acts of aggression through the last five years. They point, I think, pretty clearly to some kind of understanding and agreement, at that time at any rate, between the powers involved. We have had war on all sides, a record of combined and continuous aggression. I think we may well ask ourselves from what source these acts of aggression drew their inspiration. We may well ask upon what secret understanding they may have been based, and what the world may yet witness if, in some way, this aggression is not checked.

I mention these facts for the reason that some there may be who have the impression that this war has been caused by a mere invasion of Poland and that it has to do only with a desire on the part of Germany to regain the city of Danzig. The record speaks for itself. It discloses clearly that in the last five years some country or group of countries has been acting on the supposition that the great free countries of the world, "the democracies," as they are sometimes called—I confess I am