

eyes?" I feel that up to 1914 Canada was the happiest country in the world. When we went to Europe in 1914 we had hardly any debt, hardly any taxation. In 1918 we came back to a most distressful situation, and since then, like many other countries, we have been living largely on credit. My right honourable friend before now has pictured the financial situation of Canada. Having that situation in view, must we assume obligations to-day on the hypothesis that we, as well as the United States, shall be drawn into a general cataclysm? I feel that Canada must go about the task of modernizing her military establishment and protecting her shores in a sane way. My right honourable friend knows very well the situation in Canada. Our first duty, I surmise, is to promote peace among the ten millions of people in this country. Throughout the whole of the country there is a disturbance of mind; conflicting opinions are evident. We have had in this Chamber no less a personage than Major General the Honourable Alexander Duncan McRae, of Vancouver, suggesting that Canada should notify Great Britain that we will no more cross the Atlantic. We have had my right honourable friend (Right Hon. Mr. Meighen) stating, in 1925, I think, that Canada should not be asked to send soldiers to Europe until after the opinion of the people generally has been secured. These are but two instances of a difference in opinion, not to mention many others. The situation in this country is a very difficult one. There is a considerable body of sentiment in favour of rushing to the defence of the Mother Country. I admire that sentiment; I know what prompts it, and I respect it; but I say that at this date Canada must attend to the protection of her own shores and the modernizing of her militia establishment, and await the future.

I spoke of 1911, when the Laurier Government went down to defeat on the question of the building of a Canadian navy to protect our shores. My honourable friend from Alma (Hon. Mr. Ballantyne) told us last year, or the year before, that while he was Minister of Marine he had not a destroyer in the port of Halifax to protect that city against a German raid, and that he had to appeal to the United States, who sent us a cruiser. That statement, of course, brought me back to the moment in 1911 when the people of Canada decided to reject the policy of Sir Wilfrid Laurier. Everything that took place from 1914 to 1918 has made me feel that the policy of that great statesman was justified by events.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND.

I know that the people of Canada are very much agitated over the present situation. There is fear on the part of some that we may assume obligations that will bespeak ruin; that intervention or participation in war may bring as a conclusion the destruction of this country, and its liquidation by our neighbours to the south. These are sentiments which, among others, I have heard expressed. I say, let us not be stampeded. Let us do our duty by this little nation of ten millions and trust to God. Let us trust to Great Britain, to France, and to Italy. I cannot believe for one moment that in the light of what he learned in Ethiopia about the effect of bombing planes and other paraphernalia of war, Mussolini, surrounded as he is by the ruins made by the barbarian invasion of some fifteen hundred years ago, would risk a general cataclysm.

Hon. C. C. BALLANTYNE: Honourable senators, I had no intention of taking part in this debate until I heard some of the arguments of the honourable the leader of the Government. I think he missed the main point of my leader to my right (Right Hon. Mr. Meighen). What my leader was driving home—I think I understood him correctly—was this: that Canada must co-operate with some power, inasmuch as she is not financially able to provide for an army, a navy or an air force to protect her own territory or her sea routes. Naturally my leader suggested, and I think quite properly so, that the Government, especially at this time, should co-operate very closely with the Imperial authorities, not with a view to rushing into any overseas war, but for the sole purpose of protecting Canada now and in the future.

I have not the text before me, but I understand that under the Statute of Westminster one part of the Empire is not subordinate in any way to the others, and that each dominion undertakes to protect not only its own territory, but also its own sea routes. No honourable member of this Chamber will think for a moment that Canada is able to protect her sea routes. Certainly she is not. Even if we had the capital, we lack the trained personnel for the battleships, cruisers, and so on that would be necessary for that purpose. Therefore Canada must of necessity look to the Old Country and the British Government, for many years to come, to protect those routes. In the past the Mother Country has done that willingly, feeling it to be her duty. As Canadians we very much appreciate the protection we have had, and we know that the Old Country will give us the same protection in the future.