

high commissioner was there; the telephone and the cable were functioning then, as now; but he went—and properly so—for the purpose of ascertaining at first hand, by observation and consultation, what was to be done and what was needed. Indeed I think it was so stated in the press. Otherwise why should he go at all? If the Prime Minister's statement of Monday last is well founded, there was no need of his going; but that was not the theory then, and I submit that it is not a sound theory now.

Then the present Minister of National Defence (Mr. Ralston) went overseas. I am sure every Canadian who has followed anxiously our war effort thought he did the proper thing. I know I did. He must have felt the necessity for going, for he went; and not only did he go himself but he took with him his chief of staff, his principal executive assistant, Colonel Magee, and other high ranking officers. Why? Surely for the purpose of observation and first-hand consultation with the British authorities. Don't tell me that he went merely for the purpose of reviewing the Canadian divisions or for consultation with General McNaughton, important though the latter no doubt was. Undoubtedly he went for the all-important purpose of gaining first-hand information for the future guidance of himself, the cabinet and their advisers. To suggest anything else is to insult our intelligence. In due course I hope he will tell us, with some detail, the results of his mission.

Next to go over was the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner). We all know he went, because on many occasions since his return he has told us so. Just why he went, however, is not so absolutely clear. If it was for the purpose of selling our bacon and cheese, I suggest that he could have done quite as well by staying at home.

Finally the Minister of Munitions and Supply (Mr. Howe) went, and quite properly so; for if he did as I hope he did, and consulted with the British authorities respecting the production of materials and equipment, his visit will have served a most useful purpose. So far we have not been privileged to hear with any detail of the observations he made or the plans he brought back, but I invite him to tell us at the first appropriate opportunity; and I know his remarks will be reassuring.

The Minister of National Defence and the Minister of Munitions and Supply are key ministers who can ill afford to be absent from their desks and duties in Ottawa, but they went overseas because in their opinion it was necessary, and the proper and best thing to be done in the circumstances.

I come now to the question of an imperial war cabinet. I have not heard anybody—  
[Mr. R. B. Hanson.]

at least anybody in authority—argue that there should be set up immediately an imperial war cabinet, but the Prime Minister should not close the door to the possibility of going to England, perhaps to participate in an imperial war cabinet or conference. I have an idea, though I am no authority at all, that good results would follow from such a cabinet, as they did during the last war. Anyone who reads the memoirs of Sir Robert Borden I think will understand the reason for the setting up of the war cabinet and the good that came from it. Only yesterday the London *Dispatch* put forward the suggestion that Prime Minister Churchill fly to the United States to confer with President Roosevelt. It is suggested in the United States that if this could be done the results of the proposal would be tremendous. Personally I do not think it is possible for him to do so, but underlying that suggestion is the thought that by personal conference things might be done which cannot be done by other means of communication.

At all events, many people in this country have no confidence that there is complete cooperation between the British government and the Canadian government, that there is coordination of purpose and action, and that we are doing all that the British situation requires. The government refuses to lay on the table the papers which would establish the facts, and we do not know. I suggest that from a visit of the Prime Minister to Britain might come complete unity of purpose and action, and increased effectiveness of our war effort.

The Prime Minister has devoted a great deal of attention to our representation abroad other than in Great Britain. What is the total cost of our foreign representation? I invite the Prime Minister to tell the country. And what is the position with respect to Japan? The previous minister, Hon. Randolph Bruce, retired on December 17, 1938, over two years ago, and no new appointment has been made. During critical developments in the far east there has been no Canadian minister in Tokyo to assist the British ambassador and to keep the Canadian Prime Minister in close touch with those developments. Why do we maintain an expensive legation in Tokyo, for which there is an estimate of \$59,000 provided this year, and leave it without a minister for over two years? Is it possible that this seat is being kept warm, as some people have hinted, for the present Minister of Pensions and National Health (Mr. Mackenzie)? I think he would be a pretty good chap; why not ship him over there?

Then with respect to the position in Washington, I regret as much as anyone to learn