

I find on page 246 of Volume 1 of *Hansard* for 1937 the following statement made by the Prime Minister of Canada:

My hon. friend referred to the estimates. He stated some were claiming they were evidence of preparation for another European war. The hon. member asked: Are these estimates for that purpose? Are they for the defence of Canada, or what are they for? I am not going to anticipate what the Minister of Defence (Mr. Mackenzie) may have to say when the estimates of his department are before this house for discussion. But I do wish to say at once that, as far as the estimates presented to parliament at this session are concerned, any increase placed there has been only and solely because of what the government believe to be necessary for the defence of Canada, and for Canada alone. The estimates have not been framed with any thought of participation in European wars. They have not been framed as a result of any combined effort or consultation with the British authorities, beyond what would obviously be in the interests of all in the matter of gaining the benefit of expert opinion where expert opinion was obviously desirable. So far as policy is concerned, I wish to make it perfectly clear that no request of any kind has gone from the British government to our government with respect to a single item that appears in the estimates as they have been brought down. Whatever is there as a result of what this government feel is necessary in Canada to-day, Canada being part of the world as the world is to-day.

My hon. friend has referred to the United States and the detached position of that nation, and the determination of the United States not to become entangled in European or Asiatic affairs. What he said in that regard is perfectly true. But it must be obvious that at no previous time has the United States found it necessary to spend the amount of money it is spending to-day on purposes of defence. May I repeat that whatever has been done or is being proposed with respect to necessary increases and expenditure to bring Canada's defence to a more efficient standard than at present has been done with consideration for the needs of Canada and of Canada alone.

The prime minister was speaking at that time on a resolution introduced by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Woodsworth). That resolution dealt with the neutrality of Canada regardless of the belligerents, with war profiteers and with the means whereby causes of international conflicts and social injustice could be discovered and removed. On that 25th day of January, 1937, the leader of the Canadian government did claim that he was considering solely the defence of Canada and of Canada alone. Much was being said at that time about the increase in the militia estimates which, it was claimed, were solely for the protection of Canada. However, the government failed or forgot to amend the Militia Act and the Naval Service Act so as to make them consistent with the prerogatives, the autonomy and the privileges recognized and guaranteed

by the statute of Westminster. From that moment, it was no longer possible for me to agree with other hon. members of this house that the increase in the militia estimates was solely for the defence of Canada. What is now occurring and the policy which Canada has adopted are a complete justification of our stand, for we are witnessing to-day the change of our national defence into an imperial defence. Heretofore an autonomous and free nation, Canada is reverting to the colonial status. The code of our constitutional liberty enunciated and confirmed by the statute of Westminster is apparently relegated to the realm of fiction, or it may be that it was never anything but a hoax, whose imaginary benefits have been vaunted in parliament and on the hustings for more than a decade. Should it be so, I do not hesitate to say that the people of this country will not forget the devious and deceitful assertions of a host of public men about our participation in the last war and the compulsory military service act. The Canadian people would, on that score, be justified in taking severely to task those from whom they ought to have expected truth and enlightenment.

Since there are some who believe that Canada is no longer Canada and that the boundaries of our fatherland must be extended overseas, my mandate as member of the Canadian parliament, my lineage, my past, the survival of my fellow-citizens and of my country, the safeguard of our traditions, of our constitution and of our dearly bought prerogatives, make it imperative for me to resist with the utmost energy the sending of a single battalion and of a single Canadian soldier to the European continent or anywhere outside of Canada.

My parliamentary mandate, no more than the mandate of my colleagues in this house, has not been renewed since October 14th, 1935. Participation of Canada in external wars was not referred to the electors at the last general election. Public opinion, which is the very basis of democracy, has not expressed itself either for or against such participation and has not sanctioned it. That is why I claim that the paramount duty of the government is to request His Excellency the Governor General to dissolve parliament at once so as to give the Canadian people an opportunity of approving or rejecting any contribution, even on a voluntary basis, from Canada in extra-territorial wars.

Should I fail to maintain my attitude as I have clearly defined it so far, I would be untrue to myself, I would be betraying the people of my constituency and disowning all the principles which I embraced on my entry into